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ABOUT CRIMINALS



MRS. MEREDITH



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**A BOOK ABOUT CRIMINALS.**



**Ballantyne Press**  
**BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.**  
**EDINBURGH AND LONDON**

A BOOK  
ABOUT  
CRIMINALS.

BY  
MRS. MEREDITH.

"If, by the offence of the one man the many died, much more hath the grace of God, and the gift which is by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded unto the many (Rom. v. 15).

— *Revised English Bible.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE desire to publish some of the incidents that occur in the course of the work of the Prison Mission, in a more permanent form than the *Monthly Record* \* provides, induces me to compile this little book "About Criminals." Some of the chapters have appeared in the *Record*; and are reprinted for the purpose of preserving them, as remarkable illustrations of criminal characteristics. There is such an enormous quantity of material in my hands, derived from diaries, notes, reports, and jottings of various kinds, taken down during many years of most interesting observation of men and women, who have been committed to prison for every kind of offence, that I could write many large volumes on the subject of their peculiarities. But this labour would not be productive of any good result. My intercourse with those unhappy persons had only one object; and that was, to testify to them the

\* *Monthly Record of Christian Labour*. Published at Nine Elms Mission Depôt, Wandsworth Road.

everlasting love of God who spared not His only begotten Son, but gave Him up for us all; and who sent forth His messengers to call them in, to receive the great salvation.

I have endeavored to show, by my extracts, as many of the characteristics of the class, as would exhibit the difficulties that such persons have, in commencing with their natural development, when they are made the subjects of Divine grace. And it has been my most earnest effort to testify to the all-sufficiency of the power of God, manifested to them "in His kindness towards them through Christ Jesus."

The stories of their conversion are told as simply as possible, that the Lord alone may be magnified. It has been carefully sought to avoid exaggeration, in giving details of conversations; but there is, and always will be, difficulty in supplying these *ver-  
batim*. For they have to be written from memory of the substance, rather than of the words, of the communications. But this must ever be understood; and a certain license must be allowed to those who undertake to describe, and to depict, as must needs be done, in order to convey information, in a manner that enables a correct idea to be formed of the circumstances and events that are desirable to make known. I am anxious to go into these particulars, because I am prepared that this

book may be read by the persons about whom it is written; and I bar their criticism, by the suggestion, that I do not positively affirm that they have said the very exact words that I have set down.

I do not think they will object to the truth of anything that is advanced, though they may dispute the verbal accuracy of my statements. By writing this, I am adding a statement to my book, which is informing as to the character of some of my readers, and as to my knowledge of them. I desire, hereby to protest, that nothing is said of them that is not true. No doubt many, and especially those whose humane desire to help discharged prisoners has been much exercised, will feel that they have been working in the dark with regard to them. My revelation will probably shock them. I shall regret this very much. But it is needful to make the case plain to the mind of the public; and if, by so doing, any have an opportunity of forming a more correct judgment, as to the best mode of dealing with their case, my duty will be done.

Christians who know the plague of their own hearts; and to whom the truth that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," is the ground of their adoring love to Him "who bore their sins in His own body on the tree; and by whose stripes they are healed," will feel that this publication, of the exceeding sinfulness

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of sinners, magnifies the Lord, who is mighty to save them.

Sins of scarlet dye, crimes of deepest stain, are to Him, in whose eyes the heavens are not clean, of no more account than those we call "light offences;" and cost Him the same precious blood—the same ineffable sacrifice on Calvary.

To any who feel repulsed by the sight of the picture we have here uncovered, we desire to say a few words about a very interesting subject.

When St. Peter saw, in a vision, the great sheet let down from heaven, full of animals that he had regarded as unclean, and refused to eat them, he was admonished that God had cleansed them. There are scattered over the globe savage, uncivilised, and heathen people, who are degraded in their habits, and without moral restraints, of whom the criminal classes are the representative, in our community. To them we are commanded to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, as able to meet their whole need; and to renew them into the very image of our loving Creator and Redeemer, in righteousness and true holiness. For God is no respecter of persons; and makes no difference between them and professing Christian people, purifying all hearts alike by faith.

When they have accepted His grace, we are bound to receive them as "new creatures" into our

fellowship, and citizenship ; and to regard them as members of the blessed household of faith, coheirs with us of eternal life.

Let us, therefore, enjoy the blessed privilege that we have in the gospel, of taking these criminal outcasts by the hand, and telling them of Him who says "that joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

SUSANNA MEREDITH.

ADDLESTONE, *Dec.* 1880.



## CHAPTER I.

### *IMPRISONMENT—AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDYING CRIMINALS.*

“Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water :  
But a man of understanding will draw it out.”

—PROV. xx. 5.

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‘Then gently scan your brother Man,  
Still gentler sister Woman ;  
Tho’ they may gang a-kennin’ wrang,  
To step aside is human :  
One point must still be greatly dark,  
The moving *why* they do it ;  
And just as lamely can ye mark,  
How far, perhaps, they rue it.

Wha made the heart, ’tis *He* alone  
Decidedly can try us ;  
He knows each chord—its various tone,  
Each spring—its various bias ;  
Then at the balance let’s be mute,  
We never can adjust it ;  
What’s done we partly may compute,  
But know not what’s resisted.”

—BURNS.



# ABOUT CRIMINALS.

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## CHAPTER I.

CRIMINALS are public property. The moment one is added to the number already ascertained, he is liable to be exhibited in various ways. His likeness may become a *carte de visite* at police stations, an illustration in the "black book" of the Home Office, a photograph in the album (misnomer?) of the *Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society*, and a "waxwork figure, life size," at Madame Tussaud's. There is a great importance attached to his appearance, and no less to the registration of his deeds, and their penalties. The latter is preserved in our State archives; but the authorities let slip the very essence of the subject in which the public is interested, by neglecting to take cognizance of the curious moral phenomena which are developed by the person they have in such complete control. There is no systematic

course of scientific inquiry pursued as to the mental state of the criminal while he is in custody. In his celebrated apothegm, Hippocrates taught medical men the value of the hour of sickness, as their time for study—*οὗτος καιρὸς οἶδ' ἐς*. Surely the period of imprisonment is "the fleeting occasion," in which alone the accurate examination of the abnormal conditions of criminals can be made, which will be useful to the purposes of science.

#### SELF.

The knowledge of criminals to be gained by those who have intercourse with them in their ordinary circumstances is limited probably to scant opportunities. Very likely there are few people who have had so many occasions of continuous observation of them as myself; and I have only arrived at the certainty that there is more to be discovered in the matter. The point at which I stand is the fact, that the criminal offender differs from other offenders against the moral law in this grand particular, that the criminal offender has discovered that he has a Self, whom he bears harmless in all his misdeeds, and throws the blame on his surroundings. While the rest of us blame OURSELVES, he brings in the belongings of Self as the cause, and urges on those who desire to befriend him the duty of changing these things, and of altering his cir-

cumstances and surroundings as much as possible. I suspect that he, in his anxious experiences, has had a clearer glimpse of truth concerning the inner man than we in our undisturbed consciousness of inbred evil obtain, until we are awakened by Divine interference. His distress is his advantage. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Both of us have a mortal disease. His is acute, painful, and unconcealable. Ours is latent, obscure, and painless, but not the less deadly. It is our interest to examine that form of our common malady which is most easily seen, in order that we may in it discover some means of alleviating the sufferings and the disasters of the sharers of our heritage of sin and impurity. "I assure you," said a person of the prison class to the writer, "that I have a feeling that I could do right, and that I ought to rise up and conquer my bad ways; but, somehow, I don't! I wish some one would explain that puzzle." *And so do we.* It is a puzzle! One great advantage we have is, that the criminal is always ready to be vivisected. It is his characteristic to be gratified by the very kind of examination from which the rest of the community shrinks. With heedless daring, persons who have been in prison open their minds to their friends of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. Indeed, all who take a benevolent interest in them may, if they please,



acquire any amount of information with regard to their thoughts, purposes, and speculations. This is the general experience of those who work in Missions among them. But, owing to misapprehensions, the material gathered in the course of the intercourse that takes place between these parties, is rarely made use of. Because of the prevalent element of untruth, no belief at all is accorded to the statements of the criminal; and, for want of discrimination, much that is revealed is put to an improper use.

#### EXPOSURE.

We cannot too strongly repudiate the exposure of the ludicrous *traits* of their character for public amusement; nor reject too severely representations of their evil doings as sensational pabulum. Those to whom criminals trace such transgressions are no longer regarded as *friends*. When they find themselves betrayed by any one who has been admitted to their confidence as an "aid," and their peculiarities made use of for such purposes, not only does it render them distrustful of charitable agencies in general, but it makes them actively subversive of good influences. They put on the criminal to please a public, which they see can be used by them as well as by others, and they get up a model to suit the taste that is created in their favour.

I can testify to this as the result of several publications concerning them. It has weighed so much on my mind that I have resisted applications of many persons to give them information from the resources of our Prison Mission, lest they may, by injudicious use of it, produce this effect. On some occasions papers appeared in magazines that were brought before me by a prisoner in her cell in the old prison at Brixton, as an "unfair picture of her," and charging me with having given the "copy" to the writer!

This makes me very cautious in my publications of the knowledge I am possessed of, about these specially intimate friends of mine, particularly while I am their neighbour, and in daily communication with them. In fact, I durst not make them the theme of my remarks, if I had not arrived at a perfect understanding with them, that my work with pen and heart is always in their interest. They confide in me now sufficiently to be quite sure that nothing can induce me to show them up for the excitement of any but the kindest feelings; and that I write any thoughts I may have about them as much for them to read for their own benefit, as for others to be enlightened about them.

For some years past efforts have been made to give literary instruction to prisoners. It may be hoped that these have produced sufficient effect to

make it now practicable to induce these people to look at themselves, as their best means of cure.

“ Respice, Aspice, Prospice,  
Quicquid fieri potuit, potest.”

#### *INSTABILITY.*

One of the most experienced prison officers I ever met, said, in answer to a question of mine, “ Really the emotions of criminals are so transient, either for good or evil, that I do not think them worthy of notice. Shifting their position in life out of its natural place, lying and cheating to vary their day’s work, and grasping any kind of gratification that comes to their hand, at any cost or risk, is my summary of them.”

The value of this evidence is beyond price. The way in which it was given attested its truth. Information rendered in such a manner enables a physician to diagnose the disease of a patient with accuracy, and trace to its source the illness, the symptoms of which are detailed by a faithful witness. The jailer’s catalogue of signs gives a clue to the causes of crime in the individuals he has encountered, and we are safe in calling one, and that the chiefest of them, Instability. Now, when we have got so far, we may proceed to seek for collateral circumstances that help us to account

for the quality which has so prominent a place in their character.

A lady who is now gone to her rest, among the dead "redeemed from the earth," once said to me, "In fact, those criminals have no backbones. They writhe like serpents. Every one of them requires to have a person in the normal condition to go about with them and keep them upright."

We cannot accomplish the suggestion of this advanced thinker, but we can join in the recognition of the need to which she pointed. The first difficulty is to get people to see that there is a class of mankind in this deteriorated state. How they come to be so, is a question involving so many and such great, deep issues as to appal many godly-minded persons. By submitting to this sort of fear, they refuse a clue to knowledge of a most important and practical character and of general application, under the impression that it is "too wonderful for them, and that they cannot attain to it." This is obstructive timidity, and not real humility. The Psalmist, whom they often quote, did not suffer his lowly estimate of himself to interfere with the study of the analysis laid before him by the Holy Spirit, in the 139th Psalm. Nay, he patiently and earnestly pursued it; and when his mental vision discerned the curious processes by which his organisation was formed, he perceived

with increased clearness the greatness and goodness of his Maker, and with intensified abhorrence of the evil in his own human frame. "Search *me*, O God," he cried to the Omniscient Analyst, "and try *me*, and see if there be any wicked way in *me*, and lead *me* in the way everlasting!" On himself the reflector turned, and he accepts the benefit of the introvision.

#### HEREDITY.

Instead, therefore, of avoiding the subject of moral heredity, and declining to treat it, either on the ground alluded to, or as others suggest, because it reveals something that lowers the dignity of man, let us face the facts of the case, as they are day by day being exhibited, in answer to inquiry and investigation.

It is not a little remarkable that those who freely admit the theory that "like produces like" in physics, are slow to receive the same doctrine as applied to morals in our species. They strongly object that it would interfere with individual responsibility in mankind. But this difficulty will disappear when heredity is considered in its general sense, and then honestly applied to the particular instance in hand, placing the power of control in the right quarter.

The relations between an heir, and the things he

inherits, are well understood. If we recognise Self as a being capable of possessing (and who does not?) we arrive at a point from whence we can look at the heritage of the individual of whom we speak.

*FLESH.*

“Flesh” is said to be “heir to ills.” Much more likely Self is receiver of them. At all events it is Self that complains of them. The separate identity of Self and Flesh is very well known to us. We never mistake the one for the other. When Flesh sleeps, Self is awake; and is ever well assured, that somehow, through this Flesh it gets all its troubles, trials, and difficulties. While these two are united, the fact ever remains that Flesh fails to satisfy Self, and Self is ever craving other and better things than Flesh can supply. With Flesh Self has obtained properties and forces; and if Self be not able to use these for good, they become masters, and pitiably reduce their owner to be their slave.

All this part of us that we call Flesh is not body, solid, dead (or rather dying) substance; but a portion of it is feeling, sense, instinct, lust, passion, intellect, and affections. These qualities, or powers, we know to belong to us; we are aware that with some of them we shall one day part, that all will be

changed, and, yet, that we shall remain in full enjoyment of life. This is the revelation of our God to us in His Book of Holy Scripture. Its sacred pages, read with faith, tell all we want to know here in this life. When we shall have put off the mortal part of our human frame, the true SELF will then be unhindered in knowing even as it is known. But, even, seeing as we now do, "through a glass darkly," we perceive that Self is one thing, and its properties are another; whether the property is a long nose or a hooked one, a short back or a long one, a clever intellect or a dull turn of mind, it is all the same, the heritor is no more part and parcel *really* of the qualities he inherits, than he is of the clothes he wears, or of the land, money, goods, and chattels that form his estate. He and they are separable quantities; whatever becomes of them on severance, he is conscious that in nowise does his existence depend upon them. It is daily seen that the absence of some does not impede the exercise of others, and that their combination and co-operation vary in every individual of the human kind that comes into the world; while Self has a distinct and precise parallel in all persons, without any exception.

*MORAL HEREDITY.*

I have frequently seen instances of moral heredity well developed in the children of criminals. Surely no one can doubt that they, as well as we, succeed to ancestral personalities, not by will, but by law, and often to possessions the entail to which we would gladly cut off! But there is no hybrid in our species. Generation after generation goes on, each betraying the traces of its origin, mixture of races, families, and change of circumstances, climate, place, and associations.

The criminal class affected by all these conditions, goes on, like the varieties of human kind, to which it is parallel, alternating, transmitting, and transmuting in every conceivable way and degree, reproducing and perpetuating itself. Shall not we, who reckon on the alterations effected by varied conditions in animals of the lower kind, consider the nature of the conditions that influence man, and seek to produce results from similar processes in their case? I believe that we shall, and that there is no occasion to argue the point any more.

It is part of our natural work to do it. People only require to have their attention called to the matter to set them going. Many facts that are



always before us escape observation, and none are so easily concealed as those that belong to SELF. That individual does not desire exposure; and is generally interested in covering his share in our actions.

#### *RESPONSIBILITY.*

Responsibility lies at this point, and naturally Self shirks it, protruding its properties, and claiming for them a verdict which it deprecates on its own account. Silly Self, hiding to conceal its guilt; and thereby losing its identity! But "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do;" and He does not leave us without witness in this matter. He calls on this Self to reason with Him (Isaiah i. 18), and it is our best interest to maintain this intercourse to which we are called. We never fail to act when a minute particle of matter displaced in the bodily system, sets the whole organisation out of order; and SELF is set at defiance by a diseased brain.

#### *BRAIN DISEASE.*

In the circumstances of the lunatic we see a poor, sad SELF, bewildered by the confusion of his powers, and in horrible subjection to them. The state of the criminal and the drunkard is analogous

to this, but not similar. The two must be identified apart, as manifestations of the life of Self in antagonism with his members. Now, who shall deliver him? As the doctor releases the lunatic by curing his brain disease, can we cure the disorder affecting the criminal and the drunkard? Alas, no! "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." But we may work in the direction whence aid is to be procured. We may clear away the mist that is in their minds, and show the sufferers what their burden is, and where to go for release from its oppression.

#### NEW CREATURE.

It is to the Bible that we must turn for the advice we need. There we find this: that the power is in the Maker of Self to renew Self; and that He is willing to do it. The Lord does not offer to renew the disordered properties of the man. These He leaves to Self to subdue; but He promises to give a new Self able to do it.

The original Self that has lost the mastery "is His, and He made it." He knows what it has had to deal with, for He Himself has dwelt in flesh, and has conquered sin in the flesh.

The *vita*, *anima*, *spiritus*; or whatever word may most clearly convey to our learned, but much distracted, intelligence the simple, pure, incom-

plex life of the human creature, no man ever inherited. IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD. At the quickening moment of its entrance a never-dying heir has come into his heritage of flesh and blood, henceforth to wrestle with all its ills and woes until the day of redemption. But this heir—this spirit, soul, or Self—is fitted to hold communion with the Father of Spirits.

By such intercourse, Self can be, as His Father in heaven is, almighty over sin and crime. Without its blessed influence, they daily prevail against him. The fall from this high privilege has given Self an impetus down the "broad road" to destruction. The renewal of the union between Self and God is the desideratum of the sinner. To work out this salvation came One who alone can do it. To Him it is not more difficult to restore the criminal and the drunkard than other sinners. Without Him none of any kind can enter the kingdom of God. With faith in this alternative, and with the hope full of immortality that is found in the Gospel, we can go to the criminal and discourse with him about his immortal state and its possibilities. There will be no difficulty in reaching the Self in him. He always sets it forth distinctly. It is, in fact, his only firm footing in the shifting sand of his frame. He is more susceptible to spiritual or religious effort than others.

The word that we used to describe the striking characteristic of his nature, Instability, suggests this. The bodily inheritance of other mortals is persistent, uniform, stable; that of the criminal is the reverse. By regarding all his elements as in a state of fusion, and their constitution imperfectly assorted, we arrive at an idea of the sort of worried, troubled, incapable being he is. The drunkard, who forms a subdivision of the same class of person, shares these peculiarities. In all of the class there is this same quality at work that we call Instability. The other sort of sinners, we of the ordinary rank and file, have got stability; and it guides and keeps us within the boundaries that restrain offences.

Against these we have a barrier in our stability (shall we call it respectability?), and it protects us from the overflow of the evil that is in us; and prevents it from becoming troublesome to our neighbour. But our very stability is often an offence against our Self, holding us within the narrow limits of a mere worldly sphere, and checking aspirations for a life beyond this earth, keeping up, by its very virtues, a stern resistance to the call to look for higher things; and chaining down the heart to the passing pleasures, that die with the light of this sun, while everlasting glory is within our grasp, and the Divine promise of heavenly joy is sounding in our ears.

*ALTERABLE STATE.*

There is intense happiness in the thought that all the heredity, moral and physical, of which Self is possessed is movable—the unstable as well as the stable. They may not interchange conditions, and the unstable become stable, but they are actual things that can be dealt with. The number of circumstances affecting them can be considered, and their nature, as to whether favourable or otherwise to a specific result, ascertained. There is a doctrine of probabilities that can be applied to them as dependably as to anything else. As well as we know the atmospheric changes that affect the weather, we know what influences produce effects in a man; and we may calculate on them within the limits of a certain range of things.

*PENETRABILITY.*

The Instability of the criminal makes his range much more diffuse; and hence his limit is less definite. He is much more easily got at in consequence. One reaches him at all points; unexpectedly touching his sensibilities everywhere, and producing results immediately. This penetrability of the criminal is immensely controverted. Monsieur Despine denies him the quality of re-

remorse, and regards its absence as the distinguishing mark of his *specialité*. This I utterly deny. The whole of the able book of this great French thinker is written on false premises. In reading it, my impression is that Monsieur and myself look at the same person from a different standpoint; and that therein lies the reason of our variance.

Monsieur Despine regards the criminal as a being with whom he has nothing in common. I, on the contrary, find that he and I are exactly alike in all the elements of our constitution. I recognise that his Self and my Self differ only as varieties of the same species do; and I, therefore, have in myself the key to the phenomena that he exhibits. This fact makes me credit pride with immense power. It is quite able to produce the characteristics that M. Despine observed in some dying criminals, on whom the very agony of death did not prevail to betray remorse for their evil deeds. I well believe the facts he states, but, all the same, I refuse to allow that the sense of remorse was not there. The difference between him and me is this: he thinks that remorse ought to have been stronger than the other faculties of the man; and that it should have exhibited itself over and above them. In the Instability of the criminal, it is easy for his remorse to be driven aside, even at the extreme moment to which the *savant* refers; and it may have

been subdued by a ruling passion, which, "strong in death," made the man wear an unruffled brow, while he had a crazing terror going on in Self.

The awfulness of the thought that he will surely wake in "everlasting burnings" quickens every step towards procuring aid for his most solemn case. Religious instruction is, therefore, the *sine qua non* for the criminal. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the operation, he must be surrounded with it, if anything is to be done with him. All shades of opinion on the subject agree in this, that it is desirable he should have it; and, then, comes the question in the popular mind: to what "school of thought" shall he be introduced?

#### SALVATION.

A criminal hearing a very fair exposition of the views of the "Broad Church" party, exclaimed: "That doctrine would be the making of me, if I could only take to it! But I'd rather go along with Ned Wright, and get saved at once—'on the spot,' as he says. It's what is wanted for me. We, fellows, had best have that sort of religion; and be changed right out and out, become new men, and done with the old ways."

The Word of God provides systematic dealing for his speciality—Instability. It shows the man

that he has no moral power; but that it can be given him; and declares that "there is one Name under heaven given among men whereby he can be saved;" and that there is stability in no other. "The Anchor of the Soul" "The Rock of Ages," "The Firm Foundation," are names descriptive of the Lord Jesus Christ that prove Him to be the Saviour of those who wander like lost sheep, or, as a rudderless bark, are tossing on the waves of the troubled sea.

He who came to seek and save even these "prodigal sons," knows how they slip, and slide, and twist, and turn, and fall away, and sink into depths of sin and woe. He is able to save them, waiting to stretch out His hand, and take them up, ready to answer when they cry, "Lord, save me!"

It was in a prison that the simplest Gospel message was given—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

This faith makes men whole, cures even their worst infirmity, removes instability, and gives power to stand against the wiles of the flesh and the devil.

#### *DISCOVERY.*

To procure this for our criminal, we must first find him. The rule of detection is very simple, after one has got to know it. There is nothing so



remarkable as the ease with which the test is applicable to him. It requires little practice to determine the character of his development with unerring accuracy. All prejudice and preconceived notions arising from personal statements, or evidence of past life, must be dropped, and the eye of the observer directed only to the individual under inspection.

It is not needful to analyze him in detail. Instability, which is a functional disorder of the whole system, does its work organically, and makes one of the chief members of the body give its outward and visible sign. The eye reveals it. No matter what tale a prisoner may tell of himself, there is a rule by which his true history may be known.

Temporary causes produce appearances in the human eye that may represent Instability; but these only establish the fact, that a permanent cause may do the same thing. It is the permanence of the Instability that makes it the fundamental origin of the criminal's state.

The thing is not always manifest in the same way and degree, but it is always present. To practise the detection of it, we need not confine our investigation to convicted persons, but look round us on the uncondemned multitude. There it will be soon seen, when skilled sight scans the man, and considers his temperament and development.

"Murder will out," is the old saying. The new

one may be: "Crime will out." No eye can refuse to betray it. I want to call special attention to this hereditament of the criminal, Instability, because it can be discovered *malgré lui*, and must be dealt with whether he will or not.

*DISQUALIFIED FOR LIBERTY.*

The objection to treatment is not really on his side. He is defiant only so long as he has ignorance to deal with. His opposition vanishes when he discovers that he is thoroughly understood; and he will peaceably, even thankfully, accept the discipline that he knows will relieve him.

I have frequently mooted to criminals the idea of forming a "disqualified for liberty" class among them; and always found that they received the proposal with appreciation of its benefit. It would be interesting to hear them discuss to whom its advantages should be awarded. Those whose recommitments mark their Instability would no doubt be soon put into it; but it is my desire to determine their need, before they have undergone the ordeal of several imprisonments; and to give them such circumstances as will help them to overcome the influence of their hereditament of Instability.

When its physical manifestations are so well

known as to be infallibly detected, we shall be able to discriminate the casual offender; and to separate him from the class into which he has temporarily dropped. This will be an immense advantage, the action of which will save many, especially the young. It is the quality which betrays in childhood the existence of the crime danger. Among the children of criminals and drunkards this hereditament is very frequently seen. The way in which the little people regard one is most remarkable; their eye fully intent on curious examination of us, and of purpose to divert our observation, from the pursuit with which they are occupied.

#### *LOVE OF APPROBATION.*

In talking to very young children, and conversing with adult criminals, the same phenomenon has been apparent—intense desire to discover our appreciation of them; and to find out how to appear to be seeking to please us in words or deeds, or in any way that may at the moment be possible. The searching eye that tells this tale is the traitor against which they do not guard. Their tongue they control, their hands they hide, their steps they muffle; but their eyes cannot be concealed; and these reveal the mystery! Those manifestations must be watched by persons whose power of recog-

nition should be trained; and this would afford a system of detection worthy of the name.

There is a peculiarity in the use of the eye in criminals, that, when studied, will yield a rich reward. When acquaintance with the actions is combined with observation of the person, there will be found two things, which, put together, will form a theorem, in conformity with which rules may be laid down, to direct the treatment of individuals under the misfortune of Instability.

For specimen of Instability—exaggerated, it is true—look at the eye of the habitual drunkard. Learn on it the nature of the thing; and then, if you can get the opportunity, study the sly, cunning glances of the persons subject to it, when their attention is not directed to yourself.

Some malefactors try to baffle the perception of their observers by avoiding their gaze, the discerning effect of which they dread.

A man who, on commitment to prison, was undergoing the usual series of official questions, in his determination to hide the state of his mind from the jailer, kept his head bent, and his eyes on the ground, where he had found a pebble, and busied himself in rolling it about under his foot. Even the grave matter about which he was being interrogated did not sufficiently possess him, nor preoccupy him enough, to prevent his bestowing attention on the

trifle, in every sense, beneath him, with which he appeared to be engaged.

"What are you charged with?" asked the officer.

"Suspicion of debt, sir," he answered, giving at the same time a glance at the face of his questioner, and returning to his investigation of the state of the pebble as quickly as possible, convinced as perfectly by what he saw, as he was by what he heard, that his statement was discredited.

The conversation that ensued was a regular engagement between trained combatants. It was, of course, utterly impossible that the jailer's mind could be confused on the subject of the charge brought against the prisoner. The latter tried all his sophistry to prove himself innocent of it; and he continued to call it "debt," when it was fairly shown to be under the denomination of theft.

"I never done it, Mr. ——! You know I don't do those mean tricks. When I take, I take. I never promised to pay anything, so I am not in debt."

"It is not a question of your promising, but of your having received goods, for which you are bound to pay."

"But I never intended to pay for them."

"No doubt. Therefore you are charged with unlawful possession."

"They'll make it out anything at all that suits them, as usual, I suppose," he said.

Shortly afterwards the man was heard whistling and singing in his cell, and was admonished to be silent, and to keep the rules of the prison.

"Certainly, sir," he responded submissively.

The report was that this man was invariably a "very good prisoner."

#### *DESIRE TO OVERREACH.*

These are the cases in which the eye symptoms are most distinctly marked; and by which they may be well known. In some cases they are produced by the very desire itself breaking out in this form—the desire on the part of the culprit to overreach and to mislead his jailers, causing him to maintain a constant watch, sharp and unwinking, of every movement of the arm of justice, in its representative, the prison officer, in order to avoid its stroke. No fencing-match is more perfectly conducted by the arm of an athlete, than is the parrying, and shirking, and hiding, and glancing, that goes on with regard to his observers by the convicted offender in the hands of the law.

#### *SUBTLETY.*

This peculiarity is exhibited in children under special training and care; and it invariably marks their criminal heredity. An effort to please is a

very much pronounced *trait* in criminals. They try to be like a mirror, reflecting, and giving no image for which they are themselves responsible to those before whom they are acting. An Irish-woman used an expression once in my hearing that conveyed the whole pith of the idea:—

“I’d be any colour, like wather, to please you, my lady.”

Speaking of an accomplice in evil doing, she described her as “a say wather eel, able to twist about any way.”

The suggestion conveys an idea of the utmost pliancy imaginable; and this is the design of the criminal in his heart of hearts. *But he does not carry it out.* His untruthfulness—i.e., his Instability—prevents him. He cannot accomplish this useful purpose. This is the great difficulty of guiding him. Paddy’s pig, which has to be pulled back to make it go forward, is an apt illustration of the course that may occasionally succeed with the victim of criminal hereditaments.

Volatility, levity, excitement—all these tell their tale in the eye, and they are criminal characteristics; but they do not develop injuriously until Instability is confirmed. Early application must be made to this point. When children begin to give evidence of more than childish weakness of this kind, the time is come to put on the rein. In

the manipulation of a school, or a prison, the power of directing is easily exercised.

It is when those who are labouring under disadvantageous moral hereditaments mix with general society that their circumstances require peculiar and difficult applications. There is great need, therefore, of educating the public mind and eye to note and to understand them; and to use the restraints of kindly warning; and hindrance of bad actions; and the removal of temptation from the reach of the disabled.

#### *FALSE PRETENCES.*

With some judicious effort to spare them, and to guide them, many of the class may be useful servants, and their gratitude will not be wanting to those that help them. They have frequently been heard amusing themselves at the simplicity of employers, who were so silly as to trust them; and yet to the uninitiated their outcry invariably is: "Nobody will trust me;" as if it was only necessary to "trust" them, in order to endow them with all the powers and graces of the most moral of people!

The claim to be "trusted" that they make on the public, they do not make on those who are intimately acquainted with them; and, oh, how accurately they classify their acquaintances!



A woman, who was frequently at the Prison Mission breakfast, on her liberation from prison, began a long tale one morning, under the impression that the lady conducting the meeting that day was a stranger. Suddenly catching the eye of her listener, she said: "I beg your pardon, miss, I made a mistake. Of course, I would not try to take *you* in."

A man who, with his wife, had suffered repeated punishments, became very anxious for help to overcome his evil habits. Both he and the woman were taken under the control of the Prison Mission, and they were for a considerable time very submissive to the directions given them. The man was, on one occasion, for some time absent from town, and, on his return, he said that he had made a good lot of money in the most correct way.

"How did you do it?" was inquired.

"By an Aunt Sally, and by guessing the pea."

"You used no tricks?"

"Well, ma'am, not as they'd understand; but you would make it clear that it was wrong."

"That sort of thing must be given up if you want to be considered an honest man."

"That I do, and so my wife wants to be really honest; but we can't come to it all at once."

This is a very fair specimen of the case of numbers. "They can't come to it all at once." There must be a margin—a border land—in which they

may be recognised to be "on the mend," as they say; while the process of resistance to their bad habits is in progress.

In the Prison Mission we grant them the *pas*. The idea of the crime circle is admitted. Like "circle sailing," they tack about, and go round and round, in order to reach their aim, a *point d'appui* against their troublesome proclivities.

#### THE VERGE OF CRIME.

Most curious revelations are made by people living in this state of transition. The veil is rent that they wore in early criminal life; and they are in the full glare of the light of knowledge of good, as they formerly were of evil only. How they struggle and wrestle it is extraordinary to see. Sometimes they get a crime itself in their grasp; and they deal with it in the most interesting manner.

A man, who is just a common sample of a multitude, had had so many imprisonments that he had got a thoroughly good fright of persisting in his course: and declared he had "lost his steal," as he phrased it, "from nervousness," and offered to be "regularly square" if he got work. This was not readily procured, so he went to the country in quest of it. On his return to town he came to the Prison Mission with a very rueful face. "You should never

have let me go," he said, "out of your sight. I have had a dreadful attack, and it will be the ruin of me."

"What was it?"

"I could get no other employment when I went to —, so I (who never was on the water in my life) was hired to row a boat. We had to take the captain of a ship to his vessel. He was just dead drunk. When he was getting hoisted up the side of his ship, what should I see but a watch."

"Oh! What happened? Did you take it then?"

"I couldn't, ma'am."

"Well, that's all right, isn't it?"

"I'm afraid not. That's the worst of it."

"Were you accused of taking it?"

"Oh, of course. My hands were in my pockets, and I never touched the man. When I came ashore I found the watch in the bosom of my shirt. Here it is." So saying he laid the watch on the table. "I wouldn't, for your sake, after all you did for me, have had such a thing happen—not for all the world."

"Now that it has happened, what can I do?"

"Take it from me. Let me make nothing out of it. Shall I break it in pieces, or give it to some one?"

No advice whatever could be given in the case. It was considered most important not to interfere, but to let the man follow out the matter according to his own guidance. After some days he reappeared

in the mission-room, and was asked "What had become of the watch?" "I smashed it in bits and threw them away," he answered; "the sight of it kept me in a fever."

We had no reason to doubt this statement, and with it corresponded the man's subsequent history. His was an interesting case. He was rather clever in doing little odd jobs, and of these he got enough to give him a good living. His employers were in communication with the Prison Mission; and their report was that he sometimes took away tools or small matters that he found lying about, but that he invariably returned with penitence, and asked forgiveness, imploring that "they might be kept out of his way, or that he should be watched, or searched, or anything to prevent him from carrying out the theft."

It is most touching to witness how eagerly women, who are being helped at Nine Elms House, submit to the discipline of searching when they are leaving off work. This is only inflicted by rule in the early stages of their efforts to overcome their tendencies; but it is occasionally asked for, as an advantage, by some who are considered further advanced by their observers. "One never knows what may come over a person," is a common saying among those who are deeply experienced in their own Instability.

ciple of our law, which limits our right of interference to those whose guilt is proved, is of most convenient service in this case. Though we may have surmises as to the immense extent to which bad qualities are transmitted in our community, for all purposes, it is important to confine our attention to that exhibition of it which comes legitimately under our cognizance.

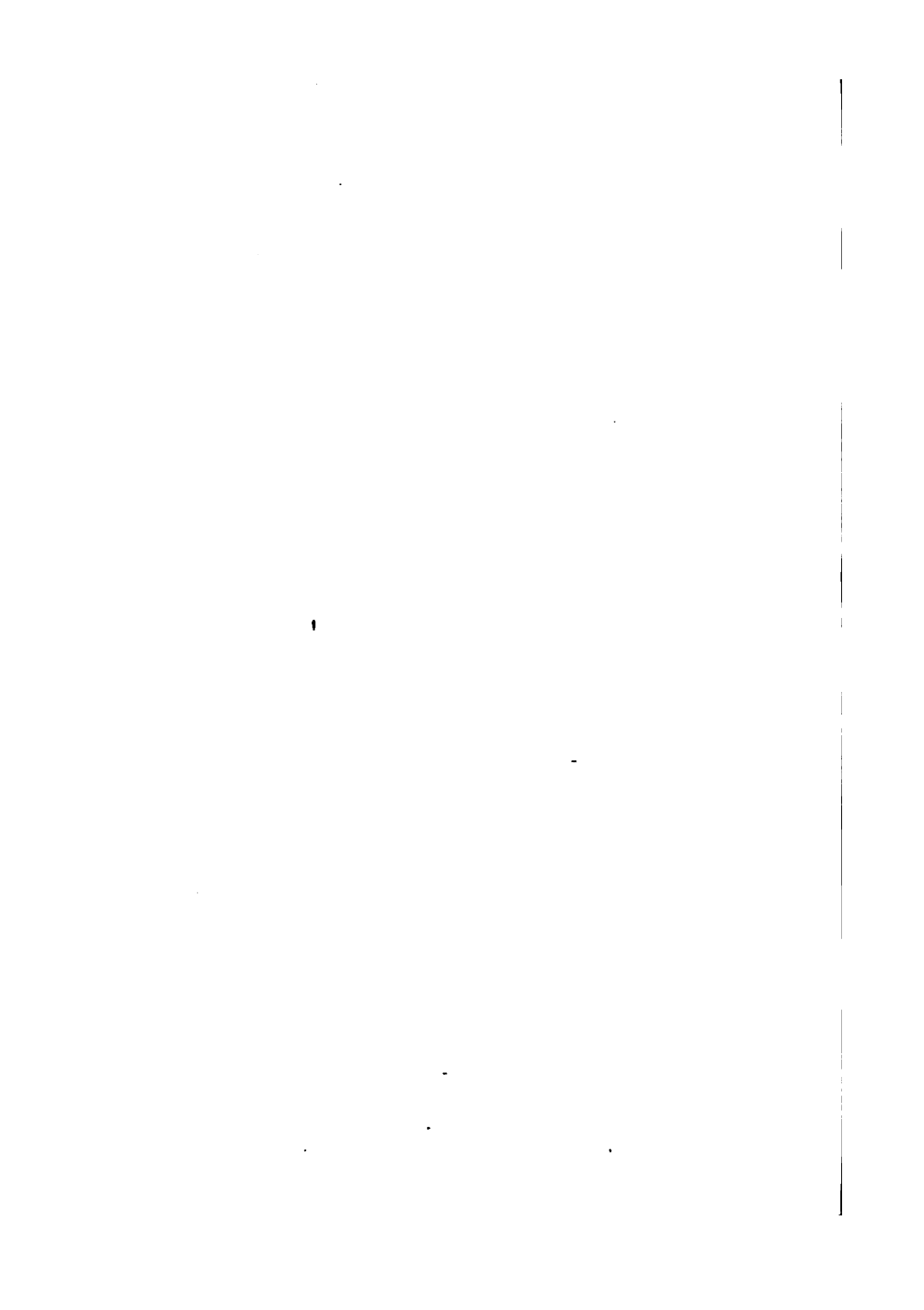
If we make a startpoint from the facts ascertained, concerning the transmission of crime from generation to generation, a field will be open to us, the scope of which we may not now define, but which will eventually have under view the whole of our population.

## CHAPTER II.

### *RESPONSIBILITY AND INCAPABILITY.*

“ Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account ; which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not : one man among a thousand have I found ; but a woman among all those have I not found. Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions.”

—ECCLES. vii. 27-29.



## CHAPTER II.

## J—R—'S STRUGGLE.

THIS case illustrates the connection between responsibility and incapability. She has a clear perception of right and wrong. She deliberately chooses the evil and refuses the good. The members of her body rebel against the law of her intellect. They act by main force. All the time she is doing violent things—rushing about like a savage; and when she is going forth to sin, or returning from having committed acts of vileness, she tells those about her, that she is compelled to act in this way, though she is quite aware of the badness of her conduct, and of its consequences. The very way and manner of her proceedings look like it. With tears and protests *against herself*, she proceeds to do her wicked deeds. There is no plea of temptation. She says, on the contrary, that she is “tempted *not* to do it”—a peculiar phrase which she explains to mean “induced to please *herself*, and to *displease* the devil.” She freely confesses



this, and tells of the struggle by which the devil makes her "gang his gate."

This process of reasoning proves her responsibility. How about her incapability? There is a curious question involved here. This fact is so like many other facts, that it would seem superfluous to record it, only that we want to put it in its true aspect, which it may not have occurred to those to do, who are most familiar with such instances.

#### *THE DRINK PASSION.*

An elderly woman came to us, on the recommendation of the chaplain of one of the county prisons—"Three months in prison for drunkenness." That was all that stood against her.

"Were you very violent?" we asked.

"Yes, very," she replied.

"When you began taking the drink were you aware of its effect?"

"Perfectly well, ma'am, but I could not help it. The fiend within me would have it. It craved for the liquor, while I hated myself for satisfying it, and loathed the state I got into!"

"Surely you could shut your mouth!"

"No, I could not. In truth I lost all power over my mouth, and long before I was unconscious I was trying to rise up and leave it, but my very legs

were restrained, and then I got mad with it, and my temper rose, and I struck people, and broke the things."

"Ah, yes," we thought, "so says the Book of God, 'strong drink is raging.' Poor woman, you were the victim of drink."

"Of Satan!" she interrupted.

"Take the blame to yourself," we urged.

"I do," she replied; "but I can't refuse to drink."

"This is it," she said, with tears; "my whole body is against even letting me think. I never have a cool, quiet minute; all is confusion and harass in my brain. There is a wild thirst on me that nothing quenches. It is surely the fire of hell!"

"Did this fire go out in prison?"

"Very nearly. It got much better. I am able to think and talk now, and I long to remain as I am; never to see, smell, or taste intoxicating drink."

This is the common experience of a large class of drunkards.

I repeat, as my deliberate conclusion, on all the evidence that has been brought before me, and it has been neither little nor light, that the only way in which such people can be preserved from this peculiar transgression is by retreat into a separated residence. Nothing less will help them. Let us not hesitate to accept it as the best form in which

to do the only thing that can be done, namely, to shut up inebriates.

The effects of intoxication differ. In some persons no criminal instincts are manifested under the influence of drink. Their incarceration should be done, on the ground that the state of drunkenness is in itself vicious. There is a great difference between criminal drunkards and ordinary drunkards.

This distinction we should try to decipher. It would teach us much, and throw new light on the question of responsibility and incapability. The compatibility of these two conditions, their co-existence, and the wondrous warfare that they maintain in the soul of man, is the puzzle of the day.

Solve it, and many difficulties in the treatment of criminals will be removed. If it be once admitted that there is a state in which incapability is removable, we are bound to effect that removal. We do it without hesitation in the case of the irresponsible. The insane are not permitted to be where their capability to injure can be indulged. They who are not answerable for their deeds are preserved from the danger of performing them; while, by a perversity that clings to our confused conscience, we cannot see our way to confining the *responsible* but *incapable* inebriate in the comparative safety of an asylum!

*THE POWER THAT OVERCOMETH.*

Against the foregoing, the following fact which it is our joy to have to record may be placed. There was a woman among the many hundreds that attend our mission-rooms, whom we, in our blindness, thought incapable of being anything but a conductor of evil. She had had a great many imprisonments. Of her large family, now all grown up to manhood and womanhood, not one escaped crime. All have had severe punishments; and even her grandchildren are beginning to replenish the "Reformatory" circle. We have among our village girls one that claims descent from her, though the old woman does not admit the relationship.

In the same district in which Mrs. N—— lived, there was a resident who, by her great success in the practice of crime, had attained distinction. She was always "quite the lady in her dress," which was showy and expensive; and she had her own furniture, in her own hired apartment. This personage had money enough and to spare, and was lavishly generous to the poorer members of her craft. Mrs. N—— and her numerous family had frequent experience of her generosity. This brought them often into communication, and Mrs. N——, latterly, began to assume a tone in conducting this intercourse that marked a change in her own

habit of thought. On many occasions she put to her friend this question, with emphasis and emotion:—

“When will *you* flee from the wrath to come?”

The repetition of the interrogation made an impression on the person to whom it was addressed; and its recurrence at last produced a result.

“Flee! I’d go anywhere,” she said one day. “I want to get out of this.”

“Then I’d try, if I was you,” replied Mrs. N——.

“What can I do?” asked the other.

“Be religious,” said Mrs. N——. “Oh, it is a nice thing! Are you not a Catholic?”

“I *was*,” answered she, “but I am nothing now.”

“Then come to our mission-room,” Mrs. N—— urged.

“No, I can’t; I am not a poor beggar, like those that go there to get something from the ladies. No, I shan’t turn to that mean work.”

And so, for some time, the woman refused to hear any more of *that* expedient for fleeing from the “wrath to come.”

However, she could not hold off. Whenever she met Mrs. N—— she made inquiries about the mission-room.

“Do come there,” said this friend.

“Oh, what could I hear there that would do me any good?”

“I’ll tell you,” said this extraordinary teacher.

"You will hear about 'the water of life'—the very thing you and I want. They are always talking about it there. There was a woman in the Bible, just such as we are, who was never happy—always wanting to be made good, and could not be, nohow; she knew she was bad, as all women do that goes to wrong ways, and she knew nothing in the world could set her right again; and the Lord Jesus told her that the water of life would satisfy her mind, and make her a new woman, *if she could only get it*. At this mission-room the ladies say that any of us that wish can have it—and we *all* wish; indeed we do. But wishing does not get it. There must be prayer, and there must be believing; and there must be good conduct. Oh, if we could do all these things, we'd have it—this precious water of life—to make us clean, and pure, and new. I'm trying hard; and, surely, so might you."

"The water of life"—oh, blessed word!—already it began to cool the parched lips and burning brow raging with the sin-fever!

"Is that what they talk of there?" said the woman; "I'll go and hear those ladies. I want—I want the water of life; nothing else will do. When will they be here again?"

"Not until Sunday."

"And this is Thursday! I can't wait; I must go for the water of life this moment."

Mrs. N—— began then to tell her all she knew about the soul-reviving draught, and they talked long and earnestly. But the teacher was herself untaught. She was only on the well side, and had not stooped down to drink and live. The thirsting woman could not rest. She was indeed “athirst for God—for the living God”—though she knew it not.

One morning, before our breakfast time, she presented herself at our house, having walked about all night to reach us. The appearance of the woman, laden with coarse finery, was very unprepossessing, and our servants did not understand her story. She was, however, admitted, and we sat down to listen to her with an interest never before experienced.

“Thy mercies are new every morning!” we exclaimed.

It is new to us in the mission to find that even such as Mrs. N—— are chosen by the Saviour to carry His messages of love to sinners; but it is “the old, old story” of His condescension. Here, indeed, we see it is the same Jesus who sent the woman of Samaria to tell others of the water of life, which she had not herself yet tasted, but which she and all the redeemed have drank, to the saving of their souls.

When she left our room, and went to the mission-house to get her breakfast, she, at once, without

waiting for a suggestion, took her shawl off, which was valuable, and removed her earrings, and gave them to be disposed of for the poor, and asked for a humbler garment to wear. All the goods she had she offered us, but we declined the gift, though we appreciated the thought. It is pleasant to know that the woman was unable to keep possession of such property; and that she relinquished all connection with it, leaving it to its fate, in the lodgings where she had lived in the time of her sin, and to which she returned no more.

This woman went into a respectable line of life, and has continued in it ever since. "Kept by the power of God unto salvation."

From time to time she comes to tell us her experience, and gives accounts of herself that bear the stamp of truth.

"Do you never feel tempted to return to your old ways, C——?"

"Very often,—every day, ma'am; but I am helped by One who will not let me go. I am sometimes slipping, when He pulls me up. I go into the public-house for beer for my lodgers, and have to be praying all the time, for fear I'd taste it myself."

"Did you never take one drop out of the jug?"

"Yes, I did one Sunday; and the moment after I put my lips to the pint, I fell down and sprained



my ankle, and spilled the beer. Wasn't it a good way to punish me, and to prevent me going to the shop for some time? He did it, and I thank Him! It is hard wrestling against it, for my flesh and blood are all for it, only I am made to hate it because it nearly ruined my soul. The wonder is that I ever got free. I pray God to preserve me from it."

Her faith gives her this victory. She believes in God—not in herself. When Self is treated in this way, and put under God, the Holy Spirit rules the heart, and sin hath no more dominion over its former captive. All Christian life manifests the same phenomena; but in the history of saved criminals they are more marked and prominent than in ordinary believers.

#### *HELPING THE WEAK.*

Another instance of a very interesting kind. It is one in which the process of self-government is being assisted by machinery, and working successfully.

E——U——, the wife of a drinking man, esteemed honest, but a fast, free liver, became the victim of drink, and crime followed. She was connected with criminals, and fell into their ways, left her home, and joined a gang of thieves. Several imprisonments succeeded each other rapidly. She was

notorious for exercising no power at all against evil, and did not even try to cease from committing offences, but repeated the same crime frequently; and, with remarkably short intervals, reappeared in prison a great number of times.

The officials regarded her as without moral sense, and did not consider her capable of improvement. This Self was a pure case of Responsibility and Incapability, and would have continued in its lost state if it had not, by God's mercy, found One Mighty to save even such. Many women like E—— U—— were in the great city in which she lived, on the day she was discharged from —— prison; and some of them had had as much discipline under the law as she had had, with the same result. They were all weak through the flesh. Sin reigned triumphant. They were its slaves, and its power over them was considered by themselves, and by every one—including even Christians who knew the power of Jesus—invincible.

And so it was His Almighty grace, this wonder-working thing—the influence of the Holy Spirit—that was on E—— U——. Even as the wind bloweth where it listeth, none knowing whither it came, the motion of Divine force arose in her. There were others like her in the mission-room, but to none of them was He sent that day save to E—— U——. While some went back to their accustomed

place, she sat in a corner, and He worked in her.

She was conscious of a strife going on within, and described it in this wise:—

“I’m nobbut a silly woman to go on doing what the devil likes. I’m sure *I* don’t like it, *me*, my Self! Only I am forced. No, I won’t be forced any longer. I’ll let God have me, and make my Self His own—I will indeed. Miss, will *you* help me?”

“Gladly. Come this minute and give your Self to the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“Will He have me, Miss? I’m sure I want Him to take me altogether, and put me out of the world, anywhere away from sin.”

“He won’t take you out of the world, but He will free you from sin.”

“I give my Self up to Him for ever and ever, but I want to feel that it is real and true that I am doing it. I am like a poor wanderer in a dream, that thinks she is in a grand castle, and wakes up and finds it was all in her sleep. Give me your hand, Miss, and let me take away some book or your handkerchief to remind me that I was here, and that I gived my Self to God here this evening.”

Holding Miss ——’s hand, the woman knelt, and made a full surrender to the Lord of her Self.

"I'll write to you, Miss, and you'll pray for me, won't you? When can I see you? Will you help me in some way? Oh, I'm very lonely in the good road; but in the bad one I had plenty of company to keep me on in *that* path, and to remind me of wicked things. Who will help my weak, foolish mind to remember good things?"

"You will have friends raised up for you," said Miss ——. "I will always keep you in view, and send ladies who are associated with me and with each other for the help of lost sheep like you. We will take your hand in ours."

"Miss, I know you intend it; but I can't do with only your kind wishes, when I don't see your face. I'll fall down, and there will be nobody to pity me."

"E—— U——, that is not true. There is *everywhere* present the sinner's Friend, Jesus, and servants of His are always at hand. Any of them will do exactly the same as I should, if you came to me in your trouble. We are all alike in word, and power, in the same Spirit. We pray for one another. You will be one of us. We will pray for you. Any one of us to whom you come will help you to pray, and to seek pardon and grace to cease from sin. Will you join us, and be one of the company, ever praying for the Holy Spirit for yourself, and for all who feel themselves to be sinful dust and ashes?"

"I will; I will this minute; and I want my name to be put down somewhere. Isn't there a list of the whole of the people that give themselves to God? Where can I find another? How can I know them? How will they know me? Put me in the way, Miss. Let me hear the names of any that are on the same way, and I will keep near and be talking to them every day. I will indeed. I am frightened of getting off the right path. So, now, you'll save me, and be my friend. I want to catch a hold on some one that has a hold on God, and it will be a comfort to me. Don't think I am to be left to get along alone. It won't do for me. I ain't like ladies as reads books and thinks. Thinking is no use to me; talk is what I want."

The lady perceived that the Lord was teaching this weary one how to find rest unto her soul, and she agreed to the plan of finding a human link, to bind her in the saving chain of the Saviour's fold.

It was of no use to say to her that the best earthly friend could only lead to the feet of the Lord.

"Yes, yes; I know," she answered; "but I want leading. Let me be only a babe, walking by the hand. I can't go alone."

This aid of the friendly hand E—— U—— has had provided for her; and it does what she requires—draws her to Him, in whom alone there is safety.

The machinery under which she lives is very simple and adaptable. It is just supervision by Christian women, and they maintain it by correspondence. Wherever E—— U—— is she is introduced to a friend in Christ, who acts as her helper. Surely this is Gospel work, and blessed of God. He hath set some in the Church as “helps.” The privilege of exercising this office for E—— U—— is shared by many; and none who have enjoyed it will refuse to testify to its peculiar efficacy, through divine grace.

Poor E—— U—— is humble, and thankful for every effort made to hold her wandering mind to its point, and obedient to all advice and direction given her to aid the conflict in which she is engaged.

“Temper is dreadful, ma’am. I want to be made silent. Yes, I’ll fill my mouth with water for fear I’d speak a word while I am provoked with those people I work with. I am very sorry I break out now and then, but I run to some one to help me to God. I want Him, though I am nobbut silly and wandering like, and don’t get right down on my knees and cry until some one comes to me.”

“But you wouldn’t depend on that some one?”

“Oh no,—a weak creature like myself! but it is some one; and I am helped by *any* one that has a hand to touch me and a tongue to talk to me.

Miss, it can't be wrong for me to have this. It is the way to love one another, I believe. Mebbe you don't want help. Well, so God has made you. I am too *stray* to get home without a clue to catch hold on. I have it like a thin, little handrail, not strong enough to support me, but like a line to guide me."

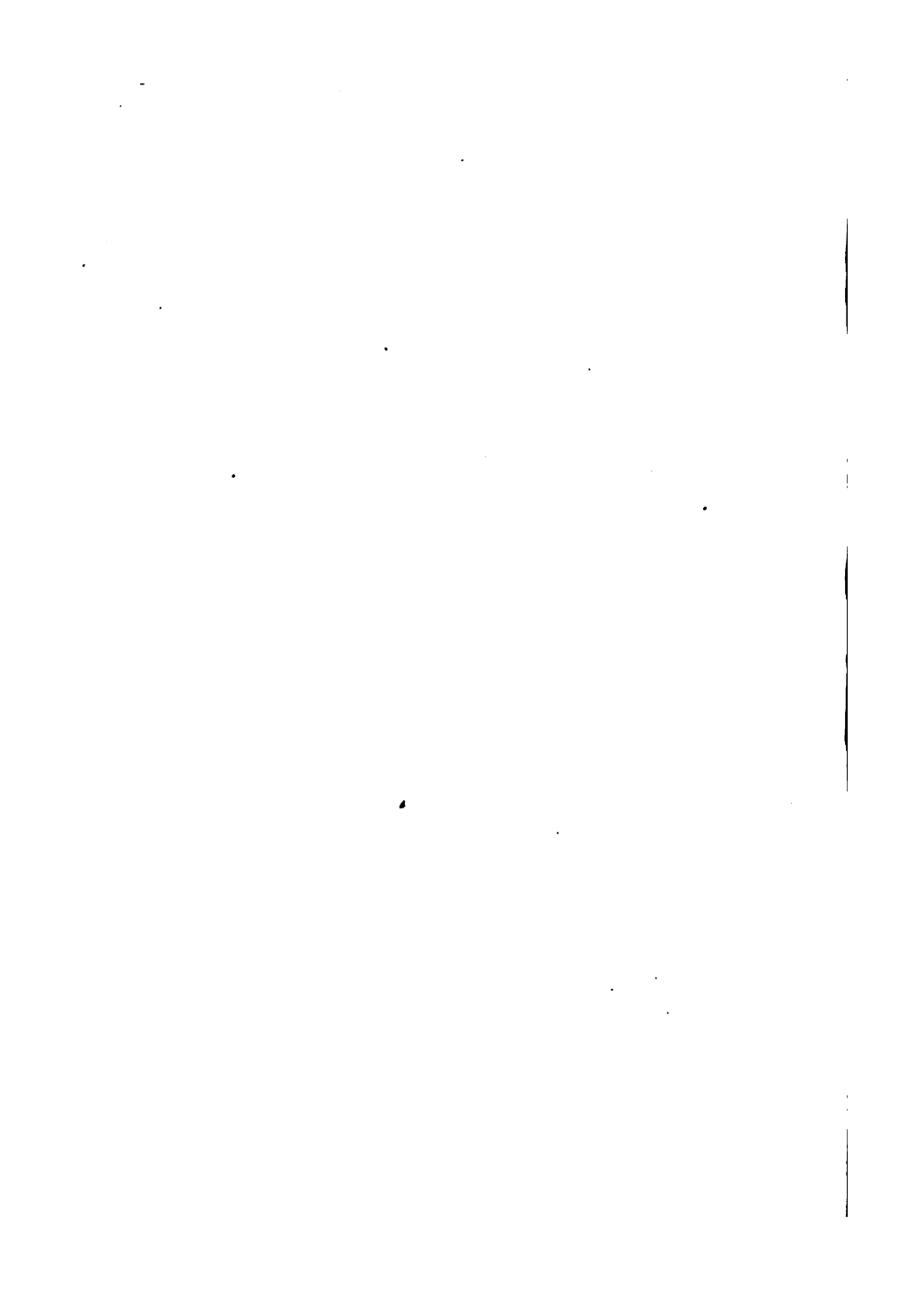
This woman gives a very clear testimony in favour of the system of placing people of her class under the care of religious associations. Organised supervision and aid are easily supplied by Christian love. Those who desire to help sinners of the criminal class to walk in the heavenly road should join in correspondence with our centre, and obtain the charge of such cases. They become means of blessing to the souls of those who labour for them, and it is a duty that might be done by many Christians.

This is a practical way of working for prisoners, but few are aware of the need there is for it. Prison mission-work means this action, among others, to be done for repentant criminals. It is requisite to learn how to do it, and how to maintain a systematic, organised mode of carrying it on. It is matter of thanksgiving that there is in existence a machinery capable of performing it; its extension and support is a duty that Christians should willingly perform. The study, too, of its

application to the use of the class of persons who need it is of the utmost importance. Information about their peculiarities can only be acquired by acquaintance with them. This publication of their characteristics is intended to stimulate and encourage Christian zeal to come to the rescue, and co-operate with the workers together with God, who are engaged in considering the cause of the poor destitute, whose cry for help He answers.

Through the hands and lips of His servants, "He looseth the prisoner," and breaks Satan's yoke from off his shoulders. For the maintenance of this work we look trustfully to the Church of Christ. No more delicate nor intricate operation could be proposed to the Lord's people; nor any higher motive suggested. We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good unto edification." For even "Christ pleased not Himself."





### CHAPTER III.

“ ‘ Wash and be clean,’ the Spirit cries ;  
‘ In our own streams,’ vain man replies :  
Long I the broken cisterns tried,  
So long the true relief denied.

Jordan was named,—I would not move ;  
But for Damascus’ rivers strove ;  
Bethesda’s pool made many clean,  
But none was near to put me in.

My misery Immanuel saw ;  
Knew how to cure, and how to draw ;  
I knew Him not—He came unsought,  
And to my soul the Fountain brought.

He apprehended—He was near ;  
I searched my heart, and found Him there.  
With His own gift the Saviour stood,  
And sweetly poured the sprinkling blood.

And, oh ! what virtue it contains  
To cleanse away my guilty stains.  
Virtue, believers can reveal,  
And yet not tell, as much as feel.

Believers know how rich it flows,  
How deep the healing balsam goes ;  
With hearts made free, such bless the hour  
Of so much love and so much power.

All honour to the Lamb proclaim :  
For ever bless His glorious Name.  
The bleeding Lamb—the living Lord,  
In heaven and on earth adored.”

—R. SEAGRAVE.



## CHAPTER III.

THE electric rapidity with which those who have gone into crime-life transfer their feelings into actions, is not the least troublesome of the phenomena that they manifest, in their intercourse even with their mission friends. It would not be surprising if they endeavoured to reserve their propensity for this sort of thing, and curbed it when they were dealing with ordinary persons, lest reprisals of a corrective character might be taken. But they boldly run this risk, when it accords with their humour ; and it is attended with various consequences, sometimes of a judicial nature. Punishment for such conduct is invariably received with more than resignation, if not with pleasure, that there is a chance of incurring the penalty to which they have been condemned. In the thick of the bustle of their criminal business, the dash of such proceedings makes diversion for their minds ; and is, in fact, the comedy and fun of their lives, much of which is so sadly tragic. Among themselves, when only performed in their own community,

such outbursts merely give rise to a spark of mirth, which, as often as not, dies out momentarily. Indeed, they are able to do little more in their own circle than this. Amusement is dead.

The intensely unmitigated force of the pursuit of Self's purposes gives no time for even frivolous levity, when it is in full swing. When the sparkles of a wild fire burst out, it is cherished as a hopeful sign of some better state than the usual cold, hard, unbroken serenity of character. It is remarkable that a criminal is capable of seeing the most exciting event, hearing the funniest tale, and being present at scenes where human feeling is in a blaze of sensation, in immovable calm.

One cold, damp evening, in the beginning of winter, when the raw atmosphere is most chilling, and the preparation for obviating its effects by change of raiment is scarcely yet effected, a lady who had just closed a prison mission sewing class, and was about to sally forth into the dark, miry streets, stood on the door-sill arranging her garments, for the encounter with the weather that she was about to undertake:

"Don't go down through the courts, ma'am," said a voice at her side, in a timorous tone, as if it was dangerous to volunteer so much advice. The tone of the speaker conveyed the impression of

consciousness of intrusion. The lady turned, and smiled encouragingly, as if inviting further comment on her proceeding, which she did not suspend; but went on tucking up her dress, and fastening her cloak, and showing her determination to face the difficulties of the case, whatever they might be.

The speaker was a tall, strong, rough woman, perhaps a year or so younger than the lady whom she addressed, but looking much older. The kind of life she had known was shown in her bloated, discoloured, and distorted features. Not even had the eyes of her much marred visage escaped unhurt, in her years of battle with crime. One of them was closed for ever against the light of our luminaries; and the other blinked over a cheek which bore a deep scar. A certain sinister expression was visible on the long upper lip, which she moved as little as possible when she articulated. The under jaw, which she literally "wagged," was deep and retreating. Such apparel as the woman wore can only be described as "wardrobe curiosities." There are shops in the low districts of London, notably one in Little Rochester Row, where the window display of clothes is of this character. Gowns hang there which one can hardly imagine any woman, of any age, or worldly circumstances, wearing either for comfort or for decoration; and all

other things for the toilet are there to match. But here was the customer for whom such dealers purvey. The faded finery of her headdress, the dirty skirt, elaborately trimmed, draped with a shawl that may once have been the pride of a gentlewoman's trousseau, showed that, even in her low estate, she valued that which had once been the best of its kind.

The small, thin, refined, pretty lady, who stood at the side of this great creature, showed no sign of fear or of repugnance, although there was enough in the appearance of the rude woman, to justify a dread of differing in opinion from her.

Milly could strike terror into men. It was her boast that she could make three of them fly, when her temper was up. When she spoke to the lady this temper was not present, but its absence was remarkable; and this in itself was solemn warning to "let sleeping dogs lie." The lady was well aware of the prudence needful in conversing with Milly; and she, therefore, contented herself with thanking her for a trifling assistance given in the operation of opening an umbrella; and slid away through the crowd, that was still lingering around the entrance.

"Good-night, Milly, and thank you," she said, as she turned off in the direction that she had been advised not to take.

"There, now, miss, you won't mind my words, but *is* going down through the courts. If anything happens to you, don't blame us. We don't want our mission ladies to be interfered with. Many's the time I've been warmed by their fire, and fed with their bread and coffee, when I've come shivering out of Tothill-fields Prison; and though I don't believe their religion, I like their good ways. This very day I took a turn out of the mission-room, and done a bit of sewing, because I hadn't a place to go to in the daylight, to get out of the way of the police. I had best go with you, since you won't go by the 'bus, and get off into the respectable streets."

The lady accepted the proffered protection, and the curiously contrasted pair set off together, to walk through the courts and alleys of S——.

The place had no terrors for the lady. She had often passed through its defiles before, without the least misgiving as to her perfect safety. Milly was determined that this blissful state of ignorance should exist no longer. She began immediately to try to dispel it, in a manner that in ordinary cases would have secured success.

"See, miss, don't rub so close to the butchers' shop-boards; they'll say you've took off a piece of the meat, and will be having you in and searching you, and then, if they find nothing, making you pay



to be let out; and if you don't give in, making a noise, and calling all the street around us."

This suggestion was sufficiently alarming to induce the lady to walk in the middle of the passage, but to this Milly decidedly objected.

"You musn't do that, miss; it looks as if you was afraid, and the moment *they* see it, *they'll* take advantage of it."

"How so, Milly? What *can* they do, and who are 'they'?" she questioned.

"'What can they do' is it? Would you like to try? I can soon let you see; and who *they* are, too, *for I am one of them.*"

So saying, she grasped the lady round the waist, and lifted her up in her arms, and danced her like a baby, and, singing a hoarse lullaby, clasped her to her bosom. The struggles of the reluctant nurseling amused the bystanders, and even Milly was moved at her piteous cries, but only to mirth.

"You poor little thing," she said, "if my kindness would kill you, what would my other temper do?"

The court was astir. It was its time for gaiety. Women and men talked, laughed, and fought, with every variety of noise and attitude. Considerable attention was bestowed on Milly and her companion, although the majority seemed to be busy with affairs of their own. Short thin men, in very tight

clothes, with caps fitting very closely to their heads, wandered restlessly about. Girls with dressed hair, and girls without dressed hair; girls in showy gowns, and girls in battered hats and bonnets. Old women, with old shawls wound round them, slipshod and beggarly in their manner, some poking in the channel, while they talked to a neighbour similarly employed, but seeking her treasure at the other side of the pavement.

"Money was dropped," they said, "when people rushed through the passage, with the police after him and her."

"Took up, was they? Oh, no, I should think not. They'd get safe somewhere."

During these remarks the lady noticed that she was being surrounded, and she anticipated some handling of a worse kind than that from which she had barely recovered.

Milly had a firm grasp of her arm, and though there was an attempt at being protective, sufficient evidence existed to prove that her power was not, by any means, exerted to procure liberation for the captive.

"Let us walk on, Milly," said the lady, in as courageous a tone as she could assume.

"Well, just to the end of the court," replied the victor; "and there you'll have to give me something to quieten these with," pointing, as she spoke,

to the people who were evidently interested in the affair.

"If you mean that I am to give you money," said the lady, "I can't; for I have not a single coin with me this moment."

"No money! no money!" cried Milly, in accents of utter astonishment, and, indeed, of complete unbelief. A lady without money was an idea she could not conceive. "Nonsense, miss, you'll just hand out something or other. It will be worse for you, if you don't. I won't be able to do anything to help you. *They'd* be on you like ferrits, and have it out of you in a minute. I'm your real friend, and will let you off easy. A few shillings will be enough to settle the matter between you and me; but *they*, though they take it so quiet-like, won't let you out of this alley until they have your purse, and anything else you may have in your pocket, without you now make a fair bargain with me. Ten shillings and your bag will satisfy me; but *they* will have your boots first thing, and then, maybe, your bonnet; and make you send home for any amount of money that they choose to ask. And, no doubt, you'll pay it, sooner than have it known that you come into such places as these to learn how sin is done."

The gravity of the situation appalled the lady,

but she turned to her loving Saviour in silent prayer, and asked Him to undertake for her.

"Dear Lord Jesus," she prayed, "give me words to say to Milly that will be the means of saving her soul."

While she waited the answer to this prayer, expecting it in the form of a strong compulsion to explain the Gospel offer once more to Milly, and to add "line upon line, precept upon precept," to the frequent lessons that had been given her, she slowly and gently repeated the fact that she had "no money."

Milly angrily interrupted her, and said, "Well, miss, if you won't, I will;" and she dived into a mysterious pocket, and thence drew some coin which she presented to one of the men who were crowding round, saying, "There! Go along, and drink the lady's health."

With a sense of relief the captive saw them go into the public-house that occupied two-thirds of the enclosure, and she turned to her friend for an explanation of the scene.

"You would not believe me, miss, that it was dangerous to come down here this cold, wet evening. They want drink, and they will have it; and you were a likely one to get it off of, with your pockets full of money."

"I told you, Milly, that I have no money about

me. Not a single penny would they have found if they had searched me all over. My dress may be worth something, but money from me they could not have got."

By this time Milly and the lady had got through the narrow passages, and passed between the posts that made the entrance to them difficult, and were out in the thoroughfare, where vehicles ply, and the world goes to and fro on all its affairs. It was a noisy, dirty street, though wide and very much frequented. Recently the courts and alleys where the foregoing matter took place have been swept away by the metropolitan authorities, so that no longer can "*they*" entrap and secrete passers-by, and procure a price for their liberation.

Milly was silent and evidently thoughtful, as she and the lady encountered the stream of the traffic that met them in the broad way. At length she said: "How are you to get home, miss? You say you have 'no money;' why, even an omnibus won't take you for nothing!"

"Oh, never mind me, Milly," replied the lady. "I'll get a cab and drive to my own home, where the man will be paid his fare. It is quite true that I have no money in my pocket nor my purse, but at home there is a supply, out of which I will get some and pay my debts."

"Yes, now I understand, miss; but it was

curious to me, certainly, to hear the likes of you say you had no money. I see that you leave it at home careful, and you know it is there, and you can get it when you want it. Of course, I must keep mine about me when I have it, and that's not always. When I have none, I am miserable until I get some; and when I have any, I don't rest till it is gone. It is a queer thing, is money, miss; it don't satisfy you to have it, nor to be without it. It puzzles me, does money! I'm spending my days sinning every way to get hold of it, and I'm no better for any of my doings, but worse and worse every hour I live! It quite took hold on me when you said you had no money, and yet you have everything you want—a cab to carry you home; and if I was to be out with 'no money,' I could not get a thing I wished for."

"Milly, you live without faith in God or man—that's what ails you; and those among whom you live have no trust in each other, and know no Heavenly One in whom they may believe, and be saved all earth's cares, sorrows, and sins, and all the dread 'for ever' in everlasting burnings. There is a sense in which I, 'having nothing, and yet possessing all things,' am so supremely blessed and happy, that I long for you to have the same glorious resource. You are surprised at the trust I expect to be shown by a cabman, and yet you require me

to trust you ! I wish you learned to trust Jesus, and to go to Him for all you want—spiritual and temporal. His grace would supply all your needs—those terrible needs, that are so burdening you, poor woman, that you shake and shiver under them, like an aspen leaf. Whenever I am afraid, I trust in my Jesus. I am a poor, weak creature, and in Him is all fulness. I am nothing : He is all in all.”

“ Can’t see, miss, what that has to do with your being out with ‘ no money.’ Good-night ! ”

The memory of the shaking she had got was still present with the lady. She was occupied with contemplation of the rapidity with which her companion lapsed from violent excitement to grave discussion of solemn subjects. It seemed as if the framework of her sinful courses was coming to pieces. There certainly was a sign of softening, somewhere about this one member of the profession that crowded the quarter, through which this labourer for Jesus so often passed, ever seeing the same unbroken front of evil presented continually.

Summer succeeded that winter of toil, and the sun of June visited the accident ward of one of the great metropolitan hospitals. Its sighing inmates were undergoing the painful yet refreshing process of dressing their wounds. One of the beds was very carefully guarded from all disturbance—

nurses, students, and doctors passed it by with caution. "She is asleep," was whispered; and it was known that "If she sleep she would do well." The case was a very critical one, and its issue was intensely interesting to the surgeons. Their skill had been tried to the utmost by it, and they were anxious that their efforts should not be frustrated.

"This is good. How has this calm come on? She was so excited yesterday I had scarcely any hope," said a medical officer.

One of the nurses answered, "A lady came to see her yesterday, and seemed to bring her peace. I never saw so sudden a change. Surely it was a conversion, if ever there was one; don't you think so, sister?"

The person addressed did not take up the subject. She was one of those slow-to-speak people, whose testimony is the more valuable from the difficulty there is in obtaining it.

Some days afterwards, she and the lady whose encounter with the thieves in — Court we have narrated, met in the corridor, and the visitor asked how the patient, Milly Downs, was going on.

"Extraordinarily well for such a case," was the answer. "Since the day she found that wonderful peace, while you prayed at her bedside, she has made steady progress. How I long to have the same blessed assurance of salvation! 'Having



nothing, but possessing all things,' is her constant declaration."

The happy state of their formerly wretched patient was the surprise of all in the place. Nothing but joy was heard from her lips of agony. The woman had come in crushed by the wheels of a dray, under which she had fallen.

"What money would you take now, Milly, to be what you were last winter?" was asked by her friend.

"None on earth, ma'am! 'Having nothing, yet possessing all things,' is better than any money. I never forgot the words you said that night when you had 'no money.' No money! Why, it's not the least matter when you have Him to go to that gives you all things. I am going to Him now for everything I want, and He supplies all my need. Every day brings fresh signs that He loves me."

"Are you not afraid that when you get well you will be sent out of the hospital into the same state in which you were before?"

"No, I don't fear that, ma'am. I am now something to Jesus, and He'll take care of me. I remember hearing a man say, that if you are poor it is a great thing to be kin to one that is rich; and it is so with Jesus. 'All fulness dwells in Him.' You told me that the night you had no money in the street with you, and you had to

make your way on trust. I see it was God you trusted to take care of you with no money. There are many would have handfuls of it, to pay their way out of danger and difficulty, but you believed you would be kept safe without troubling yourself, and paying people to do you no harm; and you *were* kept safe and sound. It was not my intention at first to be so busy about you, only I was not comfortable when I saw you making your way into our dens. I knew what might happen, and you had been so kind and anxious to do me good, I thought I would be civil to you. Wasn't it God was drawing me on? I listened to you with all attention when you said you had 'no money.' That was the word I pondered on, and that led me to see the meaning of trust and faith, and of finding in the Saviour all my wants supplied."

Milly lingered many weeks on her couch of suffering. She fluctuated between life and death. Her state interested many, and none so much as she who had marvelled at the peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind of the poor sinner. Many conversations took place between her and Milly, the story of whose prison life and visits to the mission were told with the true abasement of a changed spirit. The nurse and the visitor, who saw much of her last hours, witnessed the perfect calm and rest enjoyed by

Milly, in the awful hours that precede the parting of the being into its untried elements. She had much more joy than is common on beds of pain, when the dying time comes on.

Truly, she knew what it was to have "no money." Want of all things, misery, and destitution of soul, had been hers in a remarkable degree; and to her, therefore, the possession of all things in Christ Jesus was rapture, and can scarcely be conceived by any to whom the life she led is unknown. But those who walk by faith, as she did who had "no money" to pay for the right to pass through the thieves' quarter, and who yet ventured into it, trusting in Jesus, and strong in the same blessed Saviour, pursued their intercourse with Milly, believing that even the words of their lips might be used for blessing; *and it was so.*

The words, "No money," were employed by One mighty to save, and they brought life and immortality to one dead in trespasses and sins. Nor did the blessing end with Milly's salvation. Many conversations occurred between Milly's friend and some whom she saw in the sick ward, especially with those who were present when Milly was received, in the terrible state of contusion and bruises that resulted from the street accident.

Her first exclamation on the return of consciousness was, "I have no money;" and she repeated it

occasionally, during the whole of the first few days after her admission.

"None is wanted here. You have everything that you want free, gratis—nothing to pay—all for love," was often and often replied to her, but she heeded it not. There was evidently something working in her mind connected with the words that could not be stilled. Surely she was thinking of her spiritual destitution, and rightly describing it. She "had nothing to pay," and yet she knew what her debt was. Its immensity was told her with terrible distinctness by her awakened conscience; and her utter helplessness she had learned long ago. She wailed in her misery the words she had seized on in a moment of gracious instruction; and they became her petition, her confession, and her humiliation. Self-abhorrence must have been felt, and complete privation of all resource but Divine mercy. Desire to trust was expressed in her casting away that wherein she had formerly put her confidence. She wanted to hear the voice which says to those who have "nothing to pay"—

"Jesus paid it all—  
All to Him I owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow."

The lady was able to explain to the nurses Milly's

meaning; and to tell them how the phrase "no money" illustrated the state of sinners without Jesus. The one who had been led to desire to share the peace of the poor crushed penitent had her petition granted. Several who had already tasted it were made to see more clearly their privileges in the Beloved, whose gift to them was without money and without price; to whom they had come poor, and blind, and naked—yea, having no money—to be filled with all the fulness of God.

Another of the women whom we met among the criminals experienced a most remarkable change. "Good Sarah," she told the ladies was her name. "For I am not one of *them*. I don't steal, I beg; and that is not a sin, though people is punished for it."

Sarah never got through her task of washing in the laundry, though she applied for it again and again, always professing herself to be "very sorry, but never having been brought up to work, she really could not fulfil her undertaking, though she intended it most honestly, when she began."

It was impossible to disbelieve the story of her early life, extraordinary as it was. She told us that she had had a very good home in her childhood, wholly supported by begging. Her relations must all have been beggars, or she must have been adopted by a colony of that craft. She had no exact information about her lineage, but she had

surmises that are too absurd to record. The facts to which she deposed, and which there were good reasons to believe, were, that a gang of begging impostors resided in a metropolitan district, and enjoyed immunity from police interference, some thirty-five or forty years ago, and drove what she called "a good trade." The woman was about fifty when we made her acquaintance, but she seemed very much older. Her description of the performances of the beggars was most intensely romantic; but from what has been revealed of the habits of such people, her statements were not beyond what is ordinarily received as truth.

The invention of a story on the instant was, she declared, the qualification that secured admission to membership in the community to which she was attached. To be found anywhere, doing anything, and not to be able to account for it, when required, so as to disarm suspicion, was ruin to the whole party; so it was their rule to be always ready to give a satisfactory answer to every question on the subject of their doings, and "never, under any circumstances whatsoever, *to tell the truth!*"

"Wasn't that a most dreadful state to be in—to be obliged to tell lies for your living?" inquired a lady.

"Not at all, miss, we liked it."

"Liked it! loved it! Did you never think of the end of those who love and make a lie?"

"It never troubled me, miss, but I have heard of some being afraid to die when the time came."

"Suppose your time was come, would you not be afraid too?"

"I don't know about being afraid, but I shouldn't be surprised if I told the truth, *then*."

"It may be too late in a dying moment to get out of the grasp of the father of lies. The devil holds his children fast, and especially when their end draws near, and they are in the pangs of death."

"You'll never terrify me, miss. I don't mind those sort of things. I really came to the mission for amusement, and to show you how hard I am. You'd never believe, except you saw me, that anybody could go on as I do, and care nothing about the brimstone sea you threaten me with. I got into prison on purpose to hear you all. I'm no criminal, only a poor beggar, and that's the true truth."

"I thought you were occasionally committed for drunkenness."

"Not I, miss. I dare not drink, lest I should tell the truth."

"I almost wish that or anything, to make you feel truly your awful state."

"That's very wicked of you, miss, to wish me worse to better me."

"You distress, and puzzle, and vex me, so that I am unable to control what I say to you. It seems to me as if nothing had power to move you. I have seen you so many times on your liberation from prison, and it is always the same tale of degradation," said the lady. "And now, I am going to my home in the country, and I feel as if I had done nothing for you, nor for any one. The Lord will not say 'Well done' to me, for I have not succeeded in bringing one of you to the foot of the Cross."

"Miss, it would be the worst lie I ever told, if I pretended to go there, for, indeed, I do not want to lie to Him. One day I will tell Him the truth, when He makes me do it."

"'He can subdue all things unto Himself;' and even you may, by His Spirit, be brought to cry for mercy. I'll pray for that. Good-bye, Sarah."

The lady put out her hand, and the beggar clasped it, with a somewhat softened manner.

"When we meet next, miss, lies will be done. Don't you hope it will be on earth, where you say there is hope?"

"Yes, I pray that it may be in the place where mercy may be found, and peace and pardon."

"Don't forget your promise, miss. I hope



you'll come back and find me here, the same as ever."

"Sarah, my prayer is that you may not come here any more, as a woman from prison. I hope to meet you in a better place, and your heart changed, and your soul saved."

The lady left Nine Elms, and the beggar remained, an occasional visitor, in her usual way. Time passed on, and months were numbered. A year or so was gone by before anything more was heard of "Good Sarah."

When the Thames Embankment was a new walk, and was in the glory of its novelty, the former labourer among the prison women at Nine Elms was admiring its beauties, in company with a relative who was a clergyman. They met, as they went along, a woman, who turned and looked after them, and then followed them. The lady and her companion stopped, and there was no delay in the recognition of each other that she and the woman testified.

"Glad to see you, miss."

"Oh, Sarah Good! I hope you don't need to go to Nine Elms now?"

"Never, miss. I am a Bible-woman now, not a beggar."

"A Bible-woman! with whom do you work?"

"With a lady, of course, miss; she superintends

me, and never had such a privilege in her life. My work would fill volumes—in casual wards, and refuges, and prisoners' aids. I give tracks, and texes, and speaks to souls. I do, really, quite regular, like a revival I am—just it!"

"Be silent!" said the clergyman; "I know you well. You lay drunk at my gate about a fortnight ago, and I myself saw you committed for imposture; I have a mind to commit you again."

The woman in a most mysterious manner was gone before he had ceased to speak. How she had rendered herself invisible, the friends could not comprehend; but it had happened, for they could not see her anywhere round them. A woman was found that evening, in the gloaming, lying among heaps of mud and soil that were being collected to form the gardens at the side of the Embankment. She was insensibly drunk, and her pocket contained an empty bottle and the envelope of a letter, on which was written, "Sarah Good, Beggar at the gate of the Richman ——." With blanks is supplied an address that would be recognised, and give pain probably to some who may read this book. Sarah was lodged at the station. The Richman ——'s gate was *visée* by the police.

It was a handsome suburban house, the dwelling of one "who fared sumptuously;" and in response to a bell a servant answered. She said that "beggars

were never listened to at that gate," but she admitted, after a time, that she sometimes helped the poor. The envelope found in "Good Sarah's" pocket was shown her, and an intelligent smile showed that she had some knowledge of the name. "Oh, that's Mrs. Good's, I suppose. She used to come here for rags for her sore arm. She never begged money. She was here to-day. I had her in, and warmed her by the fire. Missis was often asking who she was, and how she lived. She said she had a little pension from her family—a son in India, and never wanted for anything but the little scraps of old linen which she begged for her bad arm or shoulder, I don't know which it was."

"Would you be surprised to hear that neither her arm nor her shoulder are sore?"

"Very much, for she had always an arm in a sling when she came for the rags."

Once or twice she appeared at Nine Elms Mission, whither the tale of Richman ——'s gate and the rags for her sore arm had travelled. Some one asked how her sore arm was, and received an angry answer to the effect that she never had had a sore in her life, "though I wish I was like Lazarus," she added, "that I might go to Abraham's bosom."

The most remarkable phenomenon connected with the Prison Mission is the way in which the objects of its service keep in the sight of the workers.

Without effort to retain them in the field of vision, or to continue intercourse with them, there seems to be a certain orbit out of which those who once enter it never disappear. The lady who had made the acquaintance of Good Sarah went to a distant part of the country, and there pursued a line of work of a somewhat similar sort. She sought out the lazy, idle, and disreputable, and called them to come to the Saviour, with whom there is plenteous redemption, speaking of His tender love and pity for their souls. "To the tramps," she said to a friend, "it is hard to bring home a sense of guilt. Thieves and other vicious and criminal people are not so hard. They break down and seek mercy; I believe that many enter Paradise and are with the Lord Jesus. I have never seen one of the beggar class really converted."

As she spoke a woman, unmistakably of that stamp, was seen to stop at the gate of the house in which the conversation was taking place.

"There now is one of the hopeless ones at our gate," said the listener. "Surely they are not shut out of heaven. This gate of ours won't open of itself; see, no one goes out to answer the call."

"One knows that it is not a person who really wants that for which they apply, but one of those impostors; and it is a pity to give servants the trouble to go out and unfasten the doors for them,"

answered the other. "Nothing can be done for such people, except pray for them. I promised one, at Nine Elms, that we used to call 'Good Sarah,' that I would pray for her; and I never forget to do so when I see a beggar at a gate anywhere—that she may be a beggar at mercy's gate. Will you join me in a word to our Heavenly Father for her?" The friends knelt, and bore Sarah Good before the Throne of Grace for a few minutes. They rose from their knees, and shortly after it was their time for going out to visit the sick, in the district allotted to their care.

When the ladies were going towards the gate, that led from the house-front to the country road, on which the pleasant dwelling of the lovely Christian family stood, a neat, kind, gentle-mannered maid-servant accompanied them from the porch.

"Did you open the gate, a little time ago, to a beggar, Maria?"

"No, ma'am. I heard no ring of the bell."

"Nevertheless there was one," said her mistress. The servant unfastened the gate, and threw it wide open to permit the ladies to pass out; and in so doing disclosed an awful sight. On the ground lay a woman, apparently gasping in an agony of pain. She had on her brow a death-like dampness. Her eye was glazed, and her livid lip was scarcely moving. The breath of life seemed departing.

The ladies had her brought into the house, and laid her on a bed, and they were ably helped by their servants. In a short time it was told them, that the woman had swallowed some warm tea, and seemed to be trying to speak. They hastened to relieve her further, if it could be done, and reached her couch just as the first articulate sound she uttered became audible.

"The beggar at the gate is me, Good Sarah—no bad Sarah—Miss—Miss—" as she caught sight of the lady from the Prison Mission. "Is the gate ajar for me? Pray for me. I am a beggar for mercy now. This time I am telling the truth." The disjointed sentences were every one of the same sort. Mercy was what she was begging. The intense feeling with which the lady set to work to help the poor beggar, now really at the gate of the Lord, who is rich in mercy to all who call upon Him—yea, unto all such as call upon Him faithfully—was most wonderful to her friend.

"I don't think I could have gone near the miserable woman with the least hope that, at the last moment, she would be accepted in Christ Jesus; but Nine Elms' experience teaches people never to despair." The night was passed in agonizing prayer. Sarah Good had short intervals of sleep, and then spasms of pain. An internal cancer was in its last throb. Between the pangs of mortal

suffering, there came a new life, manifesting its fresh existence. There was light in the darkness of the beggar's last night. She was, at length, a true beggar, and begged while she had breath. It was all for Jesus, and to Jesus, and of Jesus. The earthly friend was rarely thought of: all her want was "Jesus, and Jesus only."

"I am at the gate—a beggar—His beggar—the gate is open, oh may I enter in? I want to be washed, and pardoned, and forgiven."

"Such a beggar cannot be denied. Sarah, you will soon be satisfied. The Lord hears you, and will give you all you ask. He is the same Son of David that answered Bartimeus at the wayside, when he sat begging."

The dying woman raised her voice to a shout as she heard these words. "Have mercy on me, Lord, thou Son of God," she cried, and fell back on her pillow to beg no more. The life of Sarah Good on earth, was ended; but its history was continued in the words of the Evangelist: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

So her prayer was answered; and the hearts of all who beg at the gate of mercy, the door of grace, Jesus, who is "the way, the truth, and the life," are encouraged to hope in His word.

## CHAPTER IV.

"O Lord, I bear an aching heart ;  
Ease me of sin, whate'er the smart ;  
Within, without, I would be pure :  
Lord, hear my cry ; Lord, work my cure.

Wild is the tumult in my breast :  
Oh ! how I long for Thy true rest.  
Behind dark clouds is hid Thy face,  
Thyself reveal, and give me peace.

O Lord, accept my feeble prayer,  
Work in me by what means so'er,  
The change I need :—to sin I'd die,  
That I may live with Thee on high.

Break every earthly tie that binds,  
Disperse each wildering mist that blinds,  
Search me, and try, and clean remove  
Whatever shares with Thee my love.

O Lord, I bear a weary heart,  
All pierced with sin's empoisoned dart,  
Thou Good Physician, work my cure,  
Me purify as Thou art pure.  
I know not all I ask in this,  
But give, oh, give me holiness."

—A. GROSART.





## CHAPTER IV.

COMMERCIAL life—the pursuit of trade, buying and selling for gain—is the legitimate course of human industry. In it men fulfil the law of eating bread by the sweat of their brow; and yet it sometimes borders on the line that marks the illicit action by which the criminal secures his ends. When it crosses over, and actually becomes crime in practice, it is still somewhat different from that of the regular profession. We must recognise casual crime as of another character from habitual crime. If business men adopt habits of craft and dishonesty, they must, however unwillingly, submit to be classed with the latter when their affairs come to be published. It is to be hoped that there are very few of the commercial community secretly of the criminal type. There may be some who are credited with the position of respectable men of business who do not deserve their reputation, but a knowledge of habitual criminals forbids us to believe that it is a common circumstance. It is rare to be what, for example, our friends the coiners are,

and keep up appearances for a long time. But murder will out. Sooner or later a breach will admit the thin edge of the wedge of scandal or treachery. A scintilla of evidence blasts the whole mine of falsehood, and the firm is exploded. Such resource, such undercurrents, such organised protection, and such elastic, sinuous, serpentine lines of defence cannot environ and support the fraudulent tradesman. Criminals have a machinery at work, for the perpetuity of their ramifications of connections and co-operations, that cannot be imitated by any other people, no matter how intelligent and skilful they may be. In fact, to possess their secret, and to emulate their power, is to be of their number.

Organisation is the life of crime. Its manifestation is very interesting among the comers, of whom the following is some account:—

Mrs. R——, who had a long and widely-extended notoriety for her dexterity in passing base money, and then for being detected, was one of the earliest acquaintances of our Prison Mission life. She was an old woman at the date of our first meeting, and she then seemed to be gasping her last breath in the infirmary in Brixton Convict Prison. But she survived the many vicissitudes of her career, and lived to perform numerous operations of the sort to which we refer.

"You've passed a great many years here, haven't you, Mrs. R——? and we do you all the good we can, don't we?" said a kind matron to the sick prisoner, as we stood at the bedside, where there was apparently a great struggle going on against death.

"Yes, I'm eleven years here now, and was seven before that, and three before that again; and I'm not ungrateful—I pray for you all. God will forgive those that persecuted me. I'm a miserable old woman, but I have found mercy with my God. He is not like men, who try to ruin one, body and soul. Oh, God is merciful, and He will take care of me. I can trust Him, and go to Him—He won't cast me out." The speaker's eye caught mine, and she rambled on with intervals of hurried respiration and pauses, during which one expected that she would have succumbed to the last enemy. But she did not; her vitality seemed indomitable. There she lay, protesting against her circumstances, but admitting that they were extremely comfortable. "I have my good bed, and my good diet, and all that I want; my good matron, and my good chaplain, and my good lady visitor, and my good God; and what more can I have? As I lie on this bed I am as happy as a queen, though it is only a prison ward. Isn't it a grand thing to have a clear conscience, and to be able to say that you have never done a bad act in all your life?

That's what I can declare to the whole world. No judge, nor jury, nor parliament itself can convict me. I am not guilty of any wrong thing under the sun. I never stole a morsel in my life, nor ever hurt a creature, nor broke any law of God that ever was heard of, or writ in any book; and yet, here I am, shut up as if I was a criminal. I often wonder why it is permitted. But there's wise ends for it, I know, and one day God will make it all plain. He is my Refuge and Strength. He will deliver me from my enemies. They triumph now: by and by I will be upsides with them; and they will be put down before all the world in the day of judgment, for I shall be scot free—not guilty will be my verdict; theirs!—oh, I don't know what it will be—hell-fire won't be hot enough for *them*. They'll deserve worse than that, and God will give it to them."

This tirade explained itself. The woman was coining as she breathed; her ruling passion was strong in the apparently dying hour. We did not need the matron's warning not to be deceived by her profession of piety, for it betrayed its nature in every word she uttered; and we were immensely relieved to hear from the same source that Mrs. R—— was accustomed to the paroxysms of breathlessness that she was then enduring; and that she was not dying of the present one. At least, judging by the former attacks, and the experience

gained by observing such cases, it was thought likely by the medical officer and the nurses that she would survive.

"If the woman was penitent, and was really seeking pardon through the blood of Jesus, it would be happy to think that she was going to the place where no more temptations assail," said the matron; "but you'll have noticed that she does not at all name the Saviour. She thinks of nothing but herself, and the mercy of God direct to her, without the Lord Jesus. That's the way the self-righteous talk, and she's one of that kind."

We had observed this phenomenon, and were beginning to perceive that it characterised the prison class, and was, in fact, the great barrier between them and the Gospel of Christ. This breathless woman's intelligence was above the common, so we sought frequent opportunities to discuss with her the doctrine of repentance, laying before her the only way of salvation, and urging her to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"I assure you, ma'am, I have nothing to repent of. I'm sorry the Lord died—I am, indeed. He was wounded and bruised, I know; but there was no occasion to be done to like that for me. I'm not a regular sinner, you know. I didn't disgrace myself in any way. I married and had a large family, and brought them up respectably. My

husband is well off, and my children are provided for. I need not be here if I had not had enemies, that swore false against me. But, even what they accused me of is no sin. People try to make a *crime* of it, but no court treats it honestly, and only hustles it up; and good magistrates wash their hands of it like Pilate did. They can't judge it. No one can. It is impossible. Who in the world could prove me wrong for having a bit of bad money in my hand? I was to be pitied, I think, and so do others. How could I tell where I got it? I took change like other people, and never knew the difference of good money from bad. Of course I was cheated. Many a one is beside me; and not imprisoned for it."

"Then you are imprisoned for passing bad money?" we inferred.

"Yes, that's what they said I did, but I didn't, for the money didn't pass. It was in my hand, and I never threw it away, as I might have done, and like others do, but I held it tight, in my innocence, never thinking that there were people in the world that were so wicked as to punish me for my misfortune."

"What kind of money was it?"

"Only just a shilling, my lady. Many a time I've seen a half-crown pass easily; but at that unlucky moment there was a person that knew me

by sight, and says to the 'busman, 'That's brass money.' He takes me by the arm and walks me to the station, and there charged me with passing base coin. If I had done it, it would have been a satisfaction not to have been balked; but it was plain to see that I had not, for there was the shilling in my own hand, and not in his, for he did not take it, so it never *passed*; and how could I be convicted of *passing base coin*, if it was base. The two things had to be proved—'two counts,' they call it, was in my indictment. The first was at once withdrawn. Even the prosecutor himself said, 'She did not do it, your worship, for I would not take it out of her hand.' 'Then, she's not guilty,' says the court. 'Not of that,' says they, 'but of the other thing—trying to do it.' 'Oh, that's it, is it?' the magistrate says, and he writes down a question as to whether a person can be punished for offering a bad coin in payment. 'It must go to a higher court,' he said. And they took it to the Sessions; and there it was announced that it must be proved that I knew it was false—'had a guilty knowledge,' it was called—at the time that I offered it in payment. Of course, no mortal could be sure of that. God alone knows my ignorance. He don't betray poor people. I leave it with Him; He'll see me righted. There was the bad money. There was me. We was together,



but I had as little to do with the coin as the coin with me. I did not make it bad, nor good; and it did not make me—no, not even warm, for I got nothing for it—not a drop, though I told the 'busman I would have shared a little drink with him if he could change my shilling, as they don't like to do when coppers are not handy."

"They accused you of knowingly offering base coin, and gave you this sentence. It was a long one certainly, for an unsuccessful attempt to commit a crime. It was not your first offence, however. Were the others also failures?"

"Well, nothing ever succeeds with me. I failed twice before to convince the court that I could not help having bad money in my hand; and they put me in prison, insisting that I was doing it on purpose to defraud. Regular persecution it was all along."

"It seems to me that you must have known the money was bad somehow."

"Never—nothing of the sort. I never had a bit of bad money in my life. It was perfectly good, all the money I ever offered, downright honest silver. Not a brass coin nor a false metal ever came into my fingers. I would not touch it for the world—things covered, and made to look like what they arn't—that I do scorn! That's a crime indeed! A person that pretends that a penny silvered over is a half-crown is a regular deceiver,

and deserves to be put away. I would not be found at such treachery."

Here it was high time to put an end to the exhibition of counterfeit coin which was going on, for truly the attempt to appear righteous was odious. In fact, it was a manifest case of endeavour to pass under a false character; and it was a failure. The sign of discipleship was not there. Love and truth were absent. Jesus was not known, and without Him there was no life. The peculiar nature of the deception the woman was practising was so very singular that it suggested the probability that such casuistry as she was employing was not uncommon among the people to whom she evidently belonged; and it seemed to be important to go in among them, and seek to convince them of sin.

It is only by becoming acquainted with the special needs of special classes that one can intelligently pray for them. We earnestly desired to be made useful to those who, like Mrs. R——, had no sense that coining or passing bad money was criminal. One could have had no idea of the way in which such offenders make excuses for their illegal acts until their argument was heard. A new light was thrown on the course of evil counsel. The hideous darkness of the depths, to which Satan drags down his victims, grew upon our perception. We were startled by the knowledge that

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near us, at our very side, unknown and unnoticed, lived many whose consciences had no more feeling than that of Pharaoh of old, but who went on, from day to day, hardening their heart, and closing their eyes, refusing to hear and to see that their way was that of the deceiver, not only of their fellows but of themselves. "Deceiving their own soul" was a phrase that we now understood. It seemed that we were learning somewhat of the heart's state, "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Soon after this interview in the prison hospital, Mrs. R—— got her sentence remitted, and was allowed to return to the bosom of her family, on the ground that her health made imprisonment of no use to her, owing to the fact that her life was passed in bed. The Government considered that this might as well be done at the cost of her friends, as at that of the Treasury. An invitation to visit her at her home was sent us by her daughter; and we accepted it very joyfully, hoping that some blessing might be brought to the household, in which, no doubt, such sentiments as those expressed by Mrs. R—— were prevalent.

The district in which we found the invalid was not at all a low one. The house was one of the cleanest on the terrace of which it formed a part. We were admitted by the daughter, and Mrs. R—— was very friendly in her greeting. The moment we were seated, we were asked to read

and pray. The way in which this was done was exactly like the attaching of a prelude to a performance; and we felt that there was more to follow in the communication that was about to take place between us. We paused after reading a few verses, and said, that, if any other part of Scripture was desired, as more suitable, we would refer to it.

“Will you turn, then, to the account of people throwing money into the treasury, and the Lord Jesus looking on? I’ve heard it was all brass what they put in, most of it bad, for the Jews were always a deceiving people, and the Lord did not like it, and so when the poor woman came and put in the honest little mites, He saw that hers was good money, and He praised her. I always took care not to put a bad coin in the offertory. Some don’t mind even that, but I do. It is best to do well by God, and He’ll do well by you.”

We read the portion directed, and proceeded to draw the lesson of trust that is taught by the conduct of the liberal donor, but Mrs. R—— wanted it all her own way. The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a man, to whom we were introduced as “Mr. R——.”

“Your husband?” we supposed, and were told that he was, though he did not always behave as such, and that he had recently returned from Australia, where he had not improved his ways.

The person so censured did not appear affected by it. He was in search of something in the room, and opened sundry cupboards and drawers, and looked into, and under, all sorts of things, with an eager manner that proved him to be in special need of the article that was the object of his pursuit. His efforts were not successful; and he spoke to his wife, rather in a sharp tone, to the effect that "it must be found, and that immediately."

"Don't trouble yourself," was the answer, "I'll give you the things. I have them—here." Mrs. R—— took several small articles, that looked like tools of some sort, out of her bed, and handed them to the man, who was evidently fully contented, and would have departed, but that the woman called him to remain a little while, and listen to what the lady had to say.

"If she says that you ought to pass no more bad money, I'll believe her, for of all the precious fools ever I knew, you are the foremost."

"Of course, that is what she will say; but if she knew all, she would say, too, that you never ought to make any more of the same money."

"I! I wish I *could* make it. The bite is that I can't. I have to employ other people, and if you are the worst hand at passing it, they are the worst at keeping it quiet. Wiggs has gone and let the

police run him into the very workshop, and they found some coin, but not the tools—not the tools! I don't let them keep these things. They'd be quite able to lose them, and let the whole thing be blown on."

Mr. R—— was a tall man, with iron-grey hair, and a countenance that indicated immense strength and acute perception. His brow was projecting and his forehead receded, and the small, bright, quick eye, shaded by the prominent eyebrow, ran round the company with a sharp inquiring glance. His figure, which was square at the shoulders, had little flesh to encumber it, and was active and energetic in all its movements, but had a suppressed style of progress, always implying caution, and a careful avoidance of hurt or danger.

It was quite plain that the whole party was engaged in the coining business; and the fact of their admitting to their secret one whose sole work was going about to speak of salvation, implied that a want was felt of some safety from the consequences of sin.

"Surely you don't think that you have a right to make, and to circulate coin, in imitation of that of the Queen?" we inquired of Mr. R——. His wife's sentiments we already knew.

"There's two sides to the subject," he said. "Yours and mine don't agree."

"One of us must be right, and one must be wrong," we replied.

"It is possible we may both be right," he said. "All I am poz about is, that no one that has gold is wrong in using it for money. It is always to the good, and you can always get its price."

This was a mere discussion, and we did not deal with it, but went to the point, and directly attacked him.

"Show me a shilling," we requested.

"I haven't such a thing, mum," he answered.

So we produced one from our purse, and putting it before him, asked "who owned it?"

"Well, really, now I don't know what you mean," he answered. "It must be your own."

"That is to say, you believe that I may do what I like with it. I may change it for twelve pennies. or I may give it with nineteen other shillings for a sovereign. I may buy with it, or make it a gift. In fact, I have control over it, until the Queen calls it in, and issues a law that shillings shall not be current money any longer, and then I must surrender it. It will be no more a shilling to me. Do you take in that idea?"

"Yes, ma'am, quite well."

"I'm glad you do. I want to speak especially to you about this matter. It is quite evident to you that you have no more possession of your

own bodily existence than I have of this shilling. One day it may be called in, and above all things it is important to be prepared for the event. The Queen calls in only shillings, good coin. She doesn't receive the counterfeit ones. What you make won't be taken in. She only wants her own. So it is with the heavenly King. He calls into His glorious home only His own. I want you to inquire if you are His own, and if you expect Him to call you in as such to the mansion in the sky. Are any whom you love gone there? Perhaps a dear little child, or a parent. If any are entered into the blessed place where Jesus is, they will be never again mixed up with the untruthful and unbelieving. They will be with Him who is Truth, and they will be like Him—truth. None can enter there that defile, deceive, make lies, and love lies. Do you love to cheat people with false coin? then, there you cannot go. Your portion will be with the father of lies, in the lake that burneth with everlasting fire. Do not deceive yourself with trusting to God's mercy to save you from this, while you still continue doing the thing He abhors. He will have truth in the inward parts, and in the common acts of life He commands men to speak truth every man with his neighbour, and if they disobey He will visit them with wrath. The pardon He offers is



for those who leave off sin, and turn to Him with their whole heart. When any one asks you for money, you give them a counterfeit. In this you are like your father the devil, who was a liar from the beginning; the works of your father you do. God is the God of truth. His Word is truth. Those who come to Jesus become true. They are made like Him, because it is His Spirit that dwells in them. They bear His image, He and they are one. Have you any desire to be changed into such a new being, and to be redeemed from hell and the corruption of your flesh?"

We paused; the daughter was in tears. "Often and often I say to mother and father that this way don't pay; and that, in the long run, the game will be ruin."

"You are right, it will end in everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of His power; and nothing but the tyranny of Satan in the bottomless pit for ever and ever will be found as the result thereof."

The three were solemnised, and showed it. Mr. R—— had sat down, Mrs. R—— was sitting up, an attitude that, notwithstanding her breathlessness, she rarely assumed. Her eyes were tearful. I had never seen them so before.

"There's one gone to that happy land, ma'am, that will miss me if I don't reach it. My boy is

there; if ever a child went up to Jesus it was he; didn't he, father, tell you he was bought with the blood? and wasn't you awfully melted when he talked to you, as he was smiling away his darling soul in that bed over there, and called his mother to go with him to Jesus?"

Here the woman broke down into passionate weeping. The father rose, and stood with his face to the wall. The daughter, who too was crying, spoke eagerly: "Oh, didn't he try to turn us all right? He was so glad to go to God, he wanted us all to go, but he was afraid we would not. 'Father,' he said, 'it is no use talking to you while you won't hear the Word of God, and I want you to listen when the minister comes.' Mother, he did want you to give over the business and be a good Christian, and he warned me to never meddle with the coins."

"When did he die, and how old was he?" we inquired.

"Fourteen years and two days he was," answered the mother, "and it is nearly fourteen years since he was taken from us. I never can forget him. I would have been a good woman if he had lived to teach me, and to lead me. Now I have no one to warn me or to advise me." She relapsed into tears.

"'He being dead yet speaketh,' " we replied, and

prepared to depart, with a promise of another visit.

The daughter accompanied us to the street door. When we were leaving the room, the father put out his hand and shook ours with warmth, and he passed out into the street before us, just as his daughter had opened the door for us to pass. She sighed and said, "Wait one minute, ma'am; he's gone to the workshop, and I am greatly afraid he'll be split upon, and be put away again; and then it will be dreadful to have mother to do for all alone." She ran upstairs, and came down rapidly. "Yes, it is so," she cried; "come with me, and try to get him to give it all up."

"What a task you set before us!" we said. "Only the power of God can do that. Your father is a very determined man, and is hardening his heart against persuasion. Following him would not be of the least use; but we will come again and see him, and pray for him. Do you ever pray?"

"In church sometimes, when I go there. In prison I have prayed—oh, so earnestly!—to be converted, and be a Christian! The chaplain, the lady readers, and the visiting lady all used to put prayers on me. They did love me, and tried hard to save me, but every day I get worse, and no answer comes to their prayers. It is all no use.

It is like some of the life-women, for ever petitioning the Queen to be liberated, and never getting what they wanted."

"Don't say that no prayer is answered for you, because you are now feeling the desire to be reconciled to God, which is a sign of the conversion for which your friends prayed.

"Waiting and watching are to be done as well as praying. All are fruits of faith." When she and we parted, it was with an understanding that we were to meet on a certain day; and that we were to go to the workshop to which she had referred; and there we were to remonstrate with those who were making the false coins, and trading in them.

Mary R——'s state was most interesting to us. It became the subject of much earnest prayer; and her name was borne by many to the throne of grace, during the interval before our second visit to the abode of the old prisoner.

According to appointment, we met Mary R——.

"You have a list, I hope, ma'am, of girls you want to visit. It will be best to tell me at once some of the names you are asking for, and I'll take you direct to where we'll find them."

The very first name we mentioned, Mary said, in an indifferent way, "That's my sister Jane."

"Your mother's daughter?" we inquired.

"Yes, and father's too, and as like them as ever can be. She takes care not to come too often to see them. She is sly!—never told you, I suppose, ma'am, a word about herself, though she knew that when she was in one prison her mother was in another, and that you used to see the old woman regularly in the hospital."

"How many sisters have you, and brothers?"

"I can hardly count them rightly now, they are such a mixed-up lot. Mother had seven of us, four girls and three boys. Father had six children by his other wife. He don't like us so much since we grew up. He was a good father when we were little ones!"

When we reached the quarter to which we were bound, we inquired for the persons whose names were on my list.

"I often saw you in prison taking down these addresses, ma'am, and never thought I should go with you to find them out. Now, here we are. This is where Catherine M—— puts up. She will be surprised to see us, won't she?"

The next minute we were in a bedroom, which was crowded with furniture; and we were warmly welcomed by its occupant, Catherine, whose toilet was not sufficiently advanced to come downstairs.

"I was not at home these three days," she said;

"and I want my breakfast; so, ladies, don't be surprised at my boiling my kettle, and giving you some tea."

On the large, dirty sofa we took a reluctant seat; and the table was spread before us in a short time with many good things, supposed to be suitable for our luncheon. Catherine dressed, and wept, and talked, and made a fuss of the visit, which, she said, "she had been expecting; and the very first word of which ought to be prayer, for she was deep in all her old ways, and hated herself, and wanted to be different."

While the tea was drawing, we proposed to kneel down, and ask the Lord to take pity on the poor weak woman, who was mourning her degradation. But she begged us to wait until she had had something to eat, and she sent Mary to "call them;" but who they were she did not say. Presently several women came into the room, all known to us as having been prisoners, all very glad to find us "not afraid to come to see them."

Catherine ate her breakfast, and urged us to join her. We did not refuse, for it was what the Lord Jesus did when He was on earth; He ate and drank with such as these! There was quite a little gathering round us in that close, stuffy room, the air of which was scarcely fit to breathe. We felt that the Lord Himself was there too; and

we asked Him to give a blessing in that very hour.

A mother and daughter sat on the floor. Their resemblance to each other was remarkable. We had seen both in prison, but not together. Until this moment the connection between them was unknown to us.

"Mary Anne B——, we did hope you had gone to the Refuge to do better."

"Ma'am, I could not endure it—another imprisonment was impossible, so I came home."

The girl was a clever, handsome, dashing kind of person, who had been full of good intentions during her time of punishment. Her large eyes were full of tears as we looked pityingly at her. Our desire was to avoid all conversation about the lives of these women, and to speak of "Jesus only;" so we opened our little Bible, and began to read a portion. It was the story of the impotent man at Siloam's pool.

The lesson that there was a fountain of healing and cleansing, into which they could not get without Jesus, reached the hearts of some two of the company. He was what they wanted; and for His power to save we prayed. There was not one of the party who did not tearfully own, that she longed to be changed, and made a "new creature."

Our meeting was interrupted by Mr. R——,

who came in for a key. Mary followed him out of the room; and then came back, and called us. Our destination was the top of the house, and the room we entered was not empty. Two men were there, who had evidently been locked up by the old man; and he said as much when we proposed that we should speak to one of them, who looked as if he was dying. He was sitting on the side of a bed, from which he had just risen, and seemed to have occupied it without undressing. The partner of his imprisonment made his escape the moment we entered. Mary R—— approached the sick man, and called him many endearing names.

“He is my own brother,” she said, “and I want him to go to heaven when he dies; he’s very bad in his health.”

“Not I,” he answered; “I’d be all right if I could get out and have something to drink.”

The father was busy with some kind of machinery, that was fastened to a table that stood in the window, which was one that projected through the roof, and formed a sort of addition to the room. My eye caught sight of food in a cupboard; and I perceived that the place was well provisioned. Mary looked at the shelves inquiringly, and said, “He shall have something nice, the poor lad!” and went up and whispered to her father, who gave her a coin out of his pocket. She examined



it narrowly in the light of the window, and then exclaimed, "No, thank you, not that. I'll run no risks this time, and just after we had a prayer put upon us; come, give us a real one, and no nonsense, now."

Mr. R—— took out another, and this time it was satisfactory. Mary moved towards the door. She suddenly turned, and rushed to the bed, and lifted up the man in her arms, and carried him to a chair at the other end of the room.

He had no legs, and the movement that Mary executed so rapidly, explained much. We made no remark on it, and only followed the motion, and sat down by the side of the young man, while the woman went out.

Mr. R—— discontinued his occupation of examining the machinery, and came over to us. He held a sovereign in his hand, and offered it to us.

"What is this for?" we asked.

"Your mission," he answered; "I hear you gather money to help prisoners, and I'm sure it's a blessing."

The young man smiled. "That wouldn't do much for you, ma'am," he said.

We took the coin and examined it carefully. No difference between it and an ordinary sovereign was visible to us.

"Ain't it uncommon good?" said Mr. R——,

looking at the piece as an artist might at a *chef-d'œuvre*; "and that's what Miss Mary wouldn't take out for change."

"She doubted its reality," we responded.

"Why should she be so foolish? It is downright good gold, cost sixteen shillings, it did. I don't make more than four on any of them, and lose so often that I count it almost an even balance."

"Then why do you continue the trade if it is not profitable?" we inquired.

"Well, it is very gratifying. A man has such a power of selling 'em, if he gets a run of luck at all; it is worth the risk, it is!"

"Show that!" exclaimed our helpless friend, with an expression of intense interest.

We placed the coin in his fingers, and he instantly snapped it in two.

"Mary was no fool," he cried. "It was one of Jim's make, and she'd have been caught the first minute."

Mary reappeared with some dainties for her brother. The father, with his shaggy eyebrows lighted up by the enjoyment in his countenance, "You're my own child," he said, "and never will take a bad for a good one in mistake. You done well to refuse the sov! See what Tom's done with it"—showing her the two pieces into which it was broken.

"Ah! I thought it would come like that," was her response, as she proceeded to make arrangements for the meal she had promised the sick man.

We avoided all questions; and seemed so uninterested in the criminal proceedings, thus openly avowed, that it threw the party off their guard; and a good deal was learned, by the remarks that freely passed between them.

It was easy to infer that Mr. R.— was a kind of king of the craft. He let slip that the stock of money was too large. In fact, the article was a drug. The opportunities for employing the capital amassed were very scarce. He could not get any one of the "ladies down below" to do a stroke of work for him. They had no idea of putting his cash into circulation. It was becoming a grave question what to do with it. Mary was far more interested in something else; and she begged her father to leave us for a while. "You see now how safe the lady is, like a dove—no harm in a shipload of them—not like the police."

"I have no doubt whatever but that she is a lady, and a Christian, and that poor folks are safe with her, 'specially when they are sick and needy. I leave you all to pray for me;" and he left the room.

Mary rose, and locked the door inside, and said, "Now, ma'am, Tom is very troubled because he don't go to church, and haven't good clothes."

"Since he can't, then, we must have the Word of God here," was our quick reply. "There is no time to be lost."

Again the book was opened; and again it was listened to by ears that heard the sound with joy.

"Spending your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not," surprised from the sick man an exclamation.

"That's true! It satisfieth not," he said, "but what will satisfy a man?"

Here there was a precious opportunity to preach the gospel. The whole truth about the Son of Man and His wonderful work, the redemption of sinners, seemed to be a new tale to both the sister and brother.

"You must have often heard the 'old, old story,' " we said.

"Not so plain, not so simple; I am sure it is what I want," said the woman, "and Tom believes it this long time."

"I never was at the meetin', but I heard the preachin', and the singin', and I liked the tune, and went in for a book; buyed it, and this was it—

'For the Lion of Judah shall break every chain,  
And give us the victory again and again.'

The chain and the victory were then talked of.

"I do want my chains off," the poor lad said,

"they tie me to the wheel. I am kept grind, grind, grind, all day and all night too; and now, seemingly, he don't want such a lot of coin. Nothing suits him; ain't it a wonder he is never satisfied? There is something always going wrong. I want to have it right at last."

"So it will be, Tom—won't it, lady?—when we come to Jesus?"

"That's another of Mr. Collins' hymns, it is, 'Come to Jesus just now.' I like that one, though I know that the women sing it in lies, and ain't no more coming to Jesus than I am going downstairs."

The last words were spoken with a sigh.

"You cannot go downstairs," we said, "but you can come to Jesus. He is here, and He wants you to come. You need no human power. His Spirit helps poor sinners like you."

"Me! me! why me? I'm not the only fellow as is left in a garret to die. There's many a one in a prison that's like this. I often think of my prison as the same as those that's in for life. I shall never go out, no more than they, but I have something to do, and something to get, and they don't have nothing—not even a pipe."

This kind of congratulating himself was evidently only bravado, to keep off a breakdown into tears. Mary saw it as well as we did, and she sought to bring it on; and, as she said, "have it over."

"Ah, Tom! they have no dear sister, nor old mother loving them, and praying for them, and kissing them;" and she bent tenderly over the helpless creature, drawing his head on her bosom, while he wept like a child.

Disease was evidently present; but, as Tom had said, it seemed likely to yield to air and good treatment. "Can he not be taken to a nice country home, out of this, and be nourished and cured?" we asked.

Mary, who was herself crying, answered: "Father never will consent."

Tom made no remark on the subject, but he told us that "if we wished to hear a real good sermon, we could come next Sunday, and get up in the window ledge; and don't let no one see us, for fear they'd slate us."

"How can you manage to mount up on the seat?" we inquired.

"My arms is as good as legs," he answered, "only they don't look so well."

So saying, he seized a rope that was hanging from a beam, and swung towards the window, and managed to seat himself on the ledge, and open the casement.

Winter's rain and wind were raging. The sound was melancholy as they beat on the roof, and the day was darkening. "Before we go, let me ask

you if you believe that the Lord Jesus loves you?" I said to Tom.

He hesitated, and slowly replied, "I'm not a fellow to *love*, but I don't think He *don't*."

This was a step gained, and we added, "He gave Himself for you; that is a sign of love, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am; but the greatest is, His taking *me in return*."

"It is glorious that such wretched sinners as we have eternal life; and that we are 'safe in the arms of Jesus,' whether we live in a garret, and can't move about, or drive in carriages, and have all the good things of the world. He loves us, and that is enough. Now, if we love Him, we must do His will, and not our own. You must not continue to serve sin, but give up evil ways. Your hands can be made useful in an honest trade. Don't you think it would be a good plan to make shoes, or some such kind of work? We will gladly have you taught."

"No, ma'am, thank you, I am not living by any wrong. I do what is quite fair and honest. I make coins and am paid for it. Even father don't cheat me. I give them true value for their gold and silver. If they come to grief in passing them, that don't hurt me. I don't pass them—don't think that quite fair, I don't."

"What would be the use of them if they were not passed? Your business would be worthless if the coins you made were not to be used as money."

"You don't understand, ma'am. I'd have them all sold from hand to hand among our own people. It is their money, and no one else's. I really do believe you think that we make money to impose on you! That's what is *not* intended; and it is what people gets into prison for doing. They are quite safe while they only pay our money to each other. When they begin to lead it out into the hands of the public, they get into trouble. My father and mother both have had their share of 'prisonment for that very thing. They wanted to get public good money, for our private bad money, and *I do not think that is fair to the Queen.*"

Our astonishment and amusement were visible. He went on: "She must be let have the whole of the public for her customers at her bank. We only want our own people."

"Your circulation will be necessarily very limited," we said; "we can't imagine where or how it is used if the public is not to have it."

"*How* it is used? Where it is used? Of course, at the races, in the gambling-hells, and betting-houses. Didn't you know that, ma'am? I am surprised you didn't, for it is the most natural thing that they should have a coinage for their own use;



and they do use it too—my! It don't count for much though. Very little is ever purchased really with it. It is not actually worth what is demanded on it. I don't take in people with it. They get it from me with the exact value told 'em. If people agree to let it stand for so much; and every one accepts it as worth a certain sum, then you can settle the point, and let it be taken for what it represents."

"This is all deceit, Tom. You will puzzle yourself, and be unable to distinguish right from wrong, if you go on thinking like that."

Mary took my view. "I am sorry, Tom, you don't stand out against father; and you will be very sorry, when the day comes that will settle everything, and you will find that he has been working on the very line you don't like. He will be found to be making a cat's-paw of you. You'll escape, I believe; but I'd a deal rather you never let him work you at all. I must say my say now, ma'am—would it not be best for me to take Tom out on a little chair, a perambulator, or a thing of that kind, and beg with him, than be keeping on the business here? This is what I want you to help us in."

Tom's face did not express supreme pleasure at the prospect held out so lovingly. We felt that the subject was to be considered.

"If your plans are made, tell them to us."

"The truth is, ma'am, we can't get away from father. Mother is anxious to deliver us, but she cannot. Money is plenty with her. She can pay any fee for Tom to learn shoemaking, or any pretty trade; but he wants to try the peep-show line, and so do I. It would be most splendid. I have got lots of exhibitions promised; white mice, educated canary birds, a sweet organ-piano, and even—here she had reached a climax, and said it softly and with reverence—a Punch!"

"Impossible, Mary! Tom can never do anything of the kind you wish."

"Well then, ma'am, is he to stay here, and make bad money, and cheat the world?"

"I believe that God will find the right way for him to get his living. Don't try those curious arts. Wait on the Lord. 'Pray for His guidance. Tom, you surely don't wish to be an exhibitor?"

"Sometimes I would very much like to be drawing those fish, and ships, and houses, on the flags—would that be any harm, ma'am? You see they are not real; only all pretence—just as much so as my new coins. Is there any difference between doing one, or the other?"

The time our conversation occupied was so long, that we had, at last, to take our departure rather suddenly. We left Mary with her brother, plan-

ning a new future career; and we went bravely down the stairs, although we expected an adventure before reaching the bottom; and we had it.

On the lobby of the lower floor, on which we had been so pleasantly received a short time before, there stood a man, who was not disposed to let us pass down to the street.

"What were you doing up there?" he inquired.

"Visiting a sick man," we answered.

"Oh, I dare say, indeed! but sick men in this house don't want the likes of you; give over that bag, if you please, and walk into the room until you surrender the rest of the property you have on you."

"You mistake us for some one else, friend. Open the door, and throw light on the subject."

The man turned a lantern instead, that he had in his belt. We saw that he was a constable, and he discovered that we were not the person he supposed.

"District visitor, I suppose?" said he, more politely, "or a missionary?"

"From the Prison Mission," was the answer; and the officer stepped aside kindly, with the air of a sentinel whose challenge has been rightly answered.

"You may pass on," he gravely said; and so we did, and joyfully reached the street.

We wrote a long letter to Mrs. R——, imploring her to try and induce Tom to learn a common

trade; offering to pay the expense of the instruction; and then to set him up in the business.

Mary, too, we wished to start in some kind of industry. There was a most grateful reply; but she assured us, that it was of no use to try to dissuade either of them; and that they had resolved to strike out next Christmas on their new line of life.

The fairs that took place formerly, in the western district of London, were a quarterly terror to the inhabitants, especially at Christmas, when the excesses of their patrons were most visible. Along the "Grove," and over Notting Hill, passed many a company of performers; and they all attracted more or less attention.

Among them, on one occasion, was a little party which was specially noticed. It consisted of a donkey cart, driven by a woman, and with a man seated at her side. Their indescribable load of "notions" made the public stare. Among them was a figure of Christmas, with its mouth wide open. to receive balls thrown into it as a test of skill.

The little vehicle halted, and offered its tempting provisions to the passers-by. We were among them, and recognised our friends, Tom and Mary! They soon saw our smile of greeting, and mistook it for approval. "I knew you would be pleased, ma'am, to see us at honest work. Ain't it a comfort?"

"We hope it is 'honest work,' though it doesn't look like it," was the reply. But the definition was too fine for them to discern. They evidently considered, that they had found the only right path that was possible for them. Their mother, they informed us, was "in a bad way."

"Sick?" we inquired.

"No, ma'am, but afraid of some trouble—going back on her ticket."

"Oh, really; what has she done?"

"Got out some of the sovs, ma'am, and they have been traced to *the house*, any way, but evidence to convict her has not been found."

"What of your father?" we asked.

"Gone abroad to change a lot. English gentleman with bag of gold, getting twenty-five francs to the sov, from the foreigners!"

"That is clever, but it cannot last."

"It does though, ma'am. No one can believe how regular foolish the French is about English money. Belgians a bit more, and Germans worse."

"There can be no pleasure in deceiving them, while there might be much in explaining the money exchange to them," we remarked.

"There is no good in doing it, for they like to traffic in the same way as we do."

"I am sorry that you don't see the sin of this new business. Christian people cannot encourage you

while you pursue it. Your life is wasted, if you give it to such iniquity. Don't go to the fair. It is a bad place for you. Turn round, and go home."

"That we can't. The money for all the entertainment is paid. A man has hired us for the day. He pays us a certain sum; and then makes what he can of the entrance money."

"And what are you to perform?"

"We are to sing hymns and to preach."

"Wretched people, do not mock God. He cannot be treated this way without its bringing judgment on you from Him."

The two faces wore a very confused air. "I cannot think, ma'am," said Mary, "what you condemn now. I'm sure it is all gospel I tell. I say a word about the church, and the Bible, and the prayers and hymns, and about 'Jesus.' Surely you won't forbid us?"

"I wish you would let us do a bit for you."

"Never! I am shocked at what you propose."

"We'll go home, ma'am, to-morrow, and I'll come to your Christmas party if you give me a card." This was said in acceptance of an invitation previously given.

We put the card in her hand, and Tom was offered one too. He firmly declined on the ground of his deformity, but was as thankful and as humble as ever, when we separated.

The evening of our reception of friends at Nine Elms, Mary did not appear; and we sent next day to find out what had caused her absence. Our messenger went to the abode of the mother, Mrs. R——. We felt that the knowledge of her other house of resort was to be regarded as strictly confidential. There was some difficulty in gaining admittance to Mrs. R——; and, then, much more in inducing her to tell where her son and daughter were.

“The lady knows where she saw Tom. He is there, may be, back in his old quarters, but Mary is ‘away’ again.”

This was very distressing news. On an early occasion, we went to the place where we had made Tom’s acquaintance; and we found, that *not one of our friends inhabited that mansion now.*

A basket-maker who occupied the ground floor had never heard of a person like Tom. The “first floors” disdained our acquaintance. Higher up the residents were aggressive. In the garret, the late abode of the coiners, we were assailed with violent epithets. This room was now in the possession of a virago. We had to retreat rapidly from her storm of resentment for our intrusion.

We could but pray that the street preacher’s voice would again enter that “upper room” with the call “Come to Jesus.”

Mr. R—— returned from the Continent. He

made money by his trip. But he did not enjoy it, for he, too, was taken "away" to receive the reward of his deeds. Mrs. R—— has gone from her comfortable bed—gasped her last breath; and left no sign of a change from death unto life.

She sternly refused to the last to betray the whereabouts of her son Tom in answer to our inquiry. It may be possible that he, too, is in prison. If this is the fact, it cannot be hidden, for his deformity is surely unique; and he must be the only legless man in the gaols of England.

Among prisoners' children there came to our Mission House the child of a coiner, a girl nine years old, and by no means in destitute circumstances. Her dress was expensive, and her tastes correspondingly so. She wanted seed-cake for her lunch, and it was not easy to please her in a dinner. However, she had to partake of homely food; and, in due time, to replace her fine clothes with some of a poorer texture.

Her mother, about whom there was a story that she had "built a house with half-crowns," was then in penal servitude. She had had a qualm of conscience about the child, and had asked us to rescue her; which we speedily did, on hearing that the earliest effort of her infant genius was to get change for these celebrated half-crowns, by making purchases



in shops at such distances from each other, that evidence of her making a habit of the transaction would be difficult to obtain.

She had been known to walk the whole length of London, from east to west, with one of these peculiar half-crowns in her little hot hand; and not to change it, until she reached a neighbourhood sufficiently remote from where it was manufactured, to reduce the risk of detection to a minimum; and that at five years old!

Little weary wanderer in sin's paths! She was well aware of the evil she was doing; for even then she used to say, "Mother, do not take the 'Green-man's' pints to make your half-crowns; he says he'll lock you up if he loses one again."

The warning was disregarded. Mother got "locked up," and the child remained with a Mrs. P——, who kept the half-crowns in her custody for the convict.

Mrs. P—— was a "respectable woman," a book-stitcher. Her imprisonments, which had taken place years before, had taught her the danger of being of "no occupation."

So she took to the bookbinding trade. It happened that she found employment in the works of a "religious publisher." The books she stitched were some of the best scriptural writings of the day. She read them; but she told us, that in

them all she found no teaching that would condemn coining as an art, and the passing of such money, as felony.

"Most curious it is, ma'am, the objection there is to your making a shilling for yourself. You may make your clothes, your furniture, and your house ornaments—everything you like; but money you must *not* make. They did ought to make a commandment out of it, and say, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself a shilling, a sixpence, nor a sovereign, nor a five-pound note, nor any manner of cash, for the money is God's, and He only lets kings make it.'"

"That is a very wicked way to refer to the Owner of all things. He will not hold you guiltless for taking His name in vain."

We had to silence the woman frequently in our intercourse with her, both in and out of prison. She had a daring style of talk, to which it was sin to listen, as well as of action. Many a half hour she spent in boastings, that were altogether so transparent, that no one had an idea of believing her talk. Nevertheless, there was some foundation for the statement, that she had "built a house with half-crowns."

"All the cellars were full of them," said the little one. "Once we had them in sacks, and they were carried away in cabs. They used to come always

down stairs, having been let in at the top of the house through the roof, where all the slates were made of black half-crowns."

We mentioned this story to the girl's mother, who laughed at it; but declared that it was founded on fact; for she *did* bring them downstairs in trays, and they *were* kept in sacks in the cellars, and they *had* been sent away in cabs. But the date at which these things were done was so long ago, that she could hardly believe that her daughter could remember them. F—— was only a baby at the time we had the metal work—about two and a half, or three years old," she said.

"F—— says, too, that you sent her out to change them, when she was so small that she could not reach the top of a shop counter; and that she was taught to watch for a man going in to buy, and to follow him, and stand near him, and to let a half-crown fall; and when he had picked it up, to say 'it wasn't hers;' and then cry until, to pacify her, the people generally gave her another in exchange for it, which was all she wanted."

"Yes, what we all wanted—to mix the two kinds well up together, so that even ourselves did not know them apart. It was a great matter to show to a person, who came and said to you that there was not a coin of good money on you: 'See that—and that—and that;' and laying down, one after

another, a set of half-crowns all square and honest. They could'n't believe their senses sometimes, when I paid down a dozen or so without one being wrong."

"Then it was expected of you to commit that particular form of crime? 'Men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles.'"

"Yes, they knew me. But people often do unexpected things—'good deeds,' you know, ma'am—when the fancy comes into their heads. Now I'll do one. I'll give you the house that I built with half-crowns. It will be something to say I've given that to the mission."

It seemed that the woman really had a lease of a house; and, perhaps, had bought it out of the profits of her manufacture. But no rent had been paid for some time to the landlord, and he had accordingly taken possession of the house, and had let it out in tenements, to people of a very disreputable sort. Whenever the lessee went near it, she endeavoured to assert her rights; and was resisted in her own fashion, so that many a riot took place concerning the house "built with half-crowns."

After one of these encounters, she told us it was "a fearful den, the very place for you, ladies, where you're wanted to preach the Gospel dreadfully bad."

We went there one day, to find a room to gather

in the discharged prisoners of that street; and were successful enough to secure, at an exorbitant rent, the use of one of the "parlours." Arrangements were made for a tea-party, and we invited our guests. The evening turned out wet, and we were afraid that it might have prevented the company from coming; but it had a contrary effect. Many more came than we expected. When the room was very full it became oppressive; and it was suggested to open a window.

"Don't attempt it," said one. "The place would be surrounded, if the sound of praying and singing was to be heard here."

So warned, we bore the intensely heavy air; and earnestly entreated the women to consider their ways, and be wise—telling them the only way of escape from wrath; and the glorious hope set before them in the Gospel. At first, the audience was very inattentive. Women whispered and laughed, and tried to prevent each other from listening. There were several of the company dressed in grand Indian shawls, and wearing ornaments of foreign manufacture. Every one had had the benefit of punishment by human law; and it had produced its effect. Worse and harder hearts had come forth from prison than their previous history showed. It was a most distressing sight to witness. Some of the women were in the very prime of life;

and others were advanced in age ; but every one had the appearance of great power and strength, all of which was given to evil. The little company of mission workers were moved to much prayer. There was a united, silent petition made by them to the King of kings ; and He heard and answered it.

A woman in the front row bent her head, as we thought, in sleep. Some one tried to arouse her, but she remained with her face buried between her hands. One of the party spoke tenderly to her. They soon left the room together, the rest of the audience looking after them with surprise.

"She owns a room upstairs," said one ; "and talk of half-crowns, 'tis she that has the money. It's like dust in her room."

Others, beside her, were anxious about their souls. We could see that it was necessary to give them an opportunity to express themselves. We proposed, therefore, that the meeting should come to a close ; and that those might remain who desired to hear something more about the Lord Jesus Christ. One-half the number stayed ; and we had a precious season with them, the Holy Ghost convincing them of sin ; and giving power to receive the news of full and free pardon.

It was arranged to hold a weekly meeting ; and to give some sewing to those who desired to earn

“good money.” We prepared to leave the house ; and went to call our friend, who had retired with the reputedly rich woman.

Her room, we were told, was on the second floor ; and we mounted up to it. The doors of the rooms were old and worm-eaten ; and did not prevent the escape of sound through their chinks. We heard distinctly the voice of our fellow-labourer engaged in prayer ; and we entered the room from whence it came. Both she and the woman, with whom she had come upstairs, were on their knees. We waited in silence ; and they were not disturbed by our presence. The earnestness of their supplication carried them away.

The subject of their prayer was that a quantity of stolen goods of great value, should immediately be restored to their owner. This was to be the test of the sinner’s change of heart. If she were now made free from sin, would she not at once give up the things that she had taken ? This was the Lord’s command ; was not she expected to obey it ?

“The property was not hers,” she said. “Others had a share in it.”

“Then leave it all to them. Wash your hands clean of it.”

“I have a husband,” she replied, “and if he comes in I will be badly treated for bringing you

in here ; but I can bear it all for the sake of the blessing."

The man came in at the moment. He was a very rough, violent-looking man. "What!" he said, "you've been having the preachers here. What did they give you?"

The woman did not answer, and we began to tell him what our business was.

"You go your way, and we'll go ours," he urged. "Leave us now, and don't trouble yourself what end comes of us. Me and my wife are able to take care of ourselves."

The woman looked very sad, and she vehemently remonstrated with him on their evil life.

"I see you want to be off from me," cried he, "but I won't part with you."

She wept, and answered him in a most loving manner, still entreating him to give back the "plunder."

"Nonsense, woman, nonsense!" he answered. "It would be all the same; I'd take another haul."

"No, no," she urged. "We must end this state. I am miserable."

"I never thought you would be so chicken-hearted," he said, "or I would not have married you. But you need not try to get away. I have you tied, and I'll hold you, and no moaning and



groaning will affect me. You shall enjoy the money I took for you."

The poor woman cried piteously. "Never, never!" she murmured. "You know how I begged you not to have anything to do with it. I feel as if every moment was the last before we are taken up. That will be a happy day, for it will put an end to this state of terror."

At the moment, a policeman appeared at the door, which, it seemed, the last comer had not fastened. The husband glanced at us.

"You have had something to do with this," he muttered, and tried to make a rush towards us.

"You had better be quiet," said the officer, "and let me take you away."

A scuffle ensued. We went into a corner of the room, and the eyes of the women led us to notice a heap of jewellery on the floor. The constables secured their prisoner, and he sat down to rest, while they pinioned his hands.

"Sally," he said, "you will have to do for yourself; all the property in this room is yours. Let her take it off with her, gentlemen," he requested of his captors.

They informed him that it was impossible, for all that was there were stolen goods; and they took possession of it in the Queen's name.

A great sense of relief came into the woman's

face. Her husband became proportionately enraged. He called her names, all implying her "want of pluck" in making away with things.

"What need you have minded how handsome the things were? You should have sold them, or broken them up, or hidden them. I can't love a fool like you. You are no wife for me. You expose me to danger, and don't care about me."

How much she cared for him we all saw. She lavished her endearments on him. The officers of the law were most considerate; but the time came at last when they must remove their prisoner.

"I leave you to them. Ladies, receive my poor wife. It may be years before I see her again."

The two embraced, and the policemen did their work, searched the apartment, and removed the accused. When they were gone, the woman wept violently. We attended to her, and when she was able, we proposed to her to accompany us. She did not, at first, decide to do so; but she entreated one of the ladies to stay with her; and promised to start in the morning for our Institution. This was refused; but a delay of some hours was granted. We sat down to wait for her to accompany us. After the men's departure, she knelt some time apart and prayed alone, and then rose as if impelled by some powerful impulse, and pushed aside the table that stood in the middle of the room. Like a somnam-

bulist, she moved about the chamber, her eyes abased, her joints stiff, and an air of fear upon her as if she dreaded the return of the officers of justice, and had some momentous action to perform.

The floor beneath the table was then taken up, like a box-cover. She stood long gazing at its contents before she moved them. Then, with an air of courage, she drew out a long, fine cashmere shawl; and a second, and a third.

"These were not stolen," she said; "they were *given* to me. I own them; but I will not keep them. They were the wages of sin. Pray, let them be sold, and give the money to the poor."

"You will soon be poor yourself," we remarked. "If these are yours, you had better have the value of them yourself."

"I dare not," she answered; "I am so well known, and so much suspected. I should be in prison in an hour after it."

We did not know how to advise her further, and waited for more disclosures. *And they came.* There was a great deal of property hidden in the room, consisting of gold, jewels, and Indian shawls. We refused to permit it to be brought to our Mission House; and she was reluctant to leave it behind her. Our advice was: "have nothing to do with it, come what may. Leave sin and its fruits, and come with us."

"See here!" she cried, "there is a great secret," as she opened another compartment in the floor; and exhibited there half-crowns and sovereigns, all counterfeit coin.

"Whose are they?" we asked.

"They are the money that betting-men carry to the races, and such like places," she replied. "Worth very little—something, though; they could be melted down, and the gold used, I suppose, for they are gold, I have always heard."

We urged her not to touch another thing, and to come away at once. She threw herself on her knees, and implored the Lord to take her life, she was so wretched a sinner. She could not give up everything for Him! She loved the man to whom these things belonged. She wanted to do him kindness, and to be faithful to him; and yet she feared to continue in sin. The struggle was tremendous. We proposed, at length, to leave her to finish it alone. Her decision would only affect herself. We should be interested sympathetically in it. This announcement horrified her.

"To leave me here, *now*, to choose hell and Satan? Don't, I beseech you!"

We prayed again, and again, with her, and for her. It was very late before she had made up her mind. When the moment came that she was able to say,

"I will go," there was a deathly pallor on her face. It was a terrible agony.

"Have you no relative, no child, no parent? You are young. Can we do you no other good? What kindness do you wish us to do for you?"

"Only take me to the Blessed Saviour. He is all I want now. Those vile things are the evil One's. I am sick of them."

Then a great faintness came on her; and she had to lie down on her bed. We found it would be best to take her away as soon as possible.

Our companion went for a cab. The street had become luminous with gas, and noisy with people. When the vehicle came, the driver objected to go down the narrow part of the street; and we set out to walk to it. Our presence was no protection to our poor friend. She was called every odious epithet, and adjured by all the ties of vile association to leave us; and not to be a convert, but to stay with her own folks.

She was sternly resolved. The woman moved along between us as if she heard them not. The crowd gathered round us, as one may believe they did round the Lord Jesus, in the days of His flesh. It was a scene to try the stoutest of us. We endeavoured to parry the efforts of the mob. The purpose they displayed of intercepting her; and of detaining her by force, would have been easily executed. But we

put our case into the Lord's hands, and He brought us to the cab in safety. The driver opened the door, and there the attempt to hinder was desperate: "Pray, now, for me! Pray, ma'am, for I am very weak. I see many that I have known long, and been attached to. They are dear to me, but I have cut the tie. I must be set at liberty. I am going away to serve God," she said to the people who followed her.

Her manner was impressive: "God knows I love you all, some of you very dearly; but I am not one of you now. For some time back I have not been able to join in all your doings. My heart was turned. I was longing for Jesus. I've found Him; now I am His, and He is mine. Won't you come too? Oh, hear now what I have to say! You know I have lots of things, goods, money!"

"Yes, we do. We know you have loads of plunder."

"I leave it all for God. I leave you, too;" here her tears were excessive, and not a few of the bystanders were moved also. Men shook hands with her and withdrew; women kissed her frantically.

"You are right. You'll be happy. I wish I was going with you." The words "God bless you" came from many tongues who knew not the meaning, nor the value of the expression they used so familiarly.

We drove off amid these farewells; and the woman lapsed into such a deep, sad silence, that we left her in it until our journey's end. Then she was received into the Mission House; and her relief and freedom were soon made manifest.

The interval before her husband's trial was passed by her in great distress. Every one she could at all get to engage in prayer for him, she did, with unflinching importunity. He was convicted and his sentence was a very long one.

The wife was in deep affliction. He was wicked, but he was her husband, and she loved him. No one could interfere with her grief. It ran the natural course; and, in time, she was calmed down, and went to her duties in a subdued, chastened spirit. For some time she lived in one of our mission-houses; and, then, with our help went abroad. The extremely great trial of meeting, almost at every turn of the streets, some one who was acquainted with her, made her anxious to leave England.

"This country is full of us, ma'am; and I can't bear to meet any of the people who still keep up the bad ways. Let me go where I am unknown."

We at length consented. She sailed for another shore; and was at sea for a week, when we heard that the ship had put back. Our poor wanderer

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returned. "God will have it," she said; "I must bear my troubles here." The tender Shepherd had led her home in gracious compassion. Sally had a sore affliction in store. She became very ill. In the hope that a change of air would do her good, we sent her to a country Home for Convalescents. There she became rapidly worse; and in its kind shelter she breathed her last, going, we believe, to the Saviour, for whom she had forsaken so much that she had loved in the days of her sin.

We had a loving message from her, and an entreaty not to neglect any opportunity to urge her husband to flee from the wrath to come.

He visited us once on his liberation from prison; and was very much affected by our account of his wife's conduct and death. Her testimony was, at least, not rejected.

"Sally is safe I'm sure. She was a good while anxious to get religious, and to take me to church. I'll try to follow her advice, and yours, ma'am. But I must look after that property that was left in the 'half-crown house;' I should not wonder if it was all there to the good. There is no knowing what more may be hidden that you did not see."

It was rumoured that the man did find treasure there; but he would not acknowledge it. He visited



us occasionally at Nine Elms on Sunday evenings ; and appeared interested in the Word of God.

Those who remember a short, pale, harassed-looking man, who always waited for the "after-meeting," and was very glad to be prayed with, but who never found peace, will not forget to follow him even now with prayer. He may be still in the bondage of the flesh ; but whether in prison or out of prison, if he yet lives, he is not beyond the reach of the sound of the saving Name of Jesus.

## CHAPTER V.

“ Bowed with a sense of sin, I faint  
Beneath the complicated load ;  
Father, attend my deep complaint ;  
I am Thy creature—Thou my God.

Though I have broke Thy righteous law,  
Yet with me let Thy Spirit stay ;  
Thyself from me do not withdraw,  
Nor take my spark of hope away.

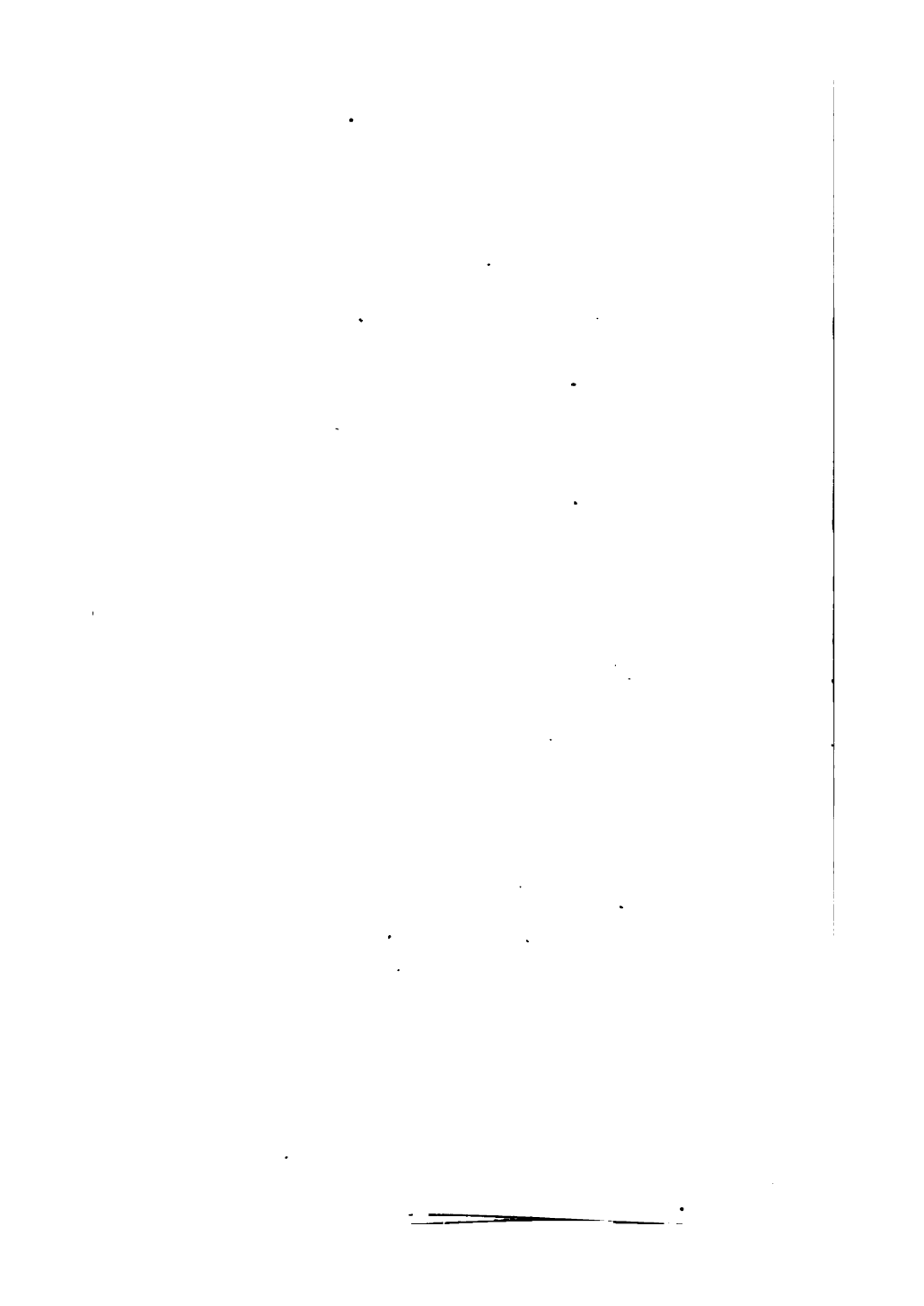
Mercy unlimited is Thine ;  
God of the penitent Thou art ;  
The saving power of blood divine  
Shall ease the anguish of my heart.

Then let not sin my ruin be,  
Give me in Thee my rest to find ;  
Jesus, the sick have need of Thee,  
Thou great Physician of mankind.

In my salvation, Lord, display  
The triumphs of abounding grace ;  
Tell me my guilt is done away,  
And turn my mourning into praise.

Then shall I add my feeble song  
To theirs who chant Thy praise on high ;  
And spread with an immortal tongue  
Thy glory through the echoing sky.”

—A. M. TOPLADY.



## CHAPTER V.

AMONG all our notes about criminals, we have not one in which it is stated that even the most artful, clever, designing, and intelligent of the class were ever successful in amassing property. None of them have ever, to our knowledge, made a fortune and enjoyed it. They make what they call "a lot of money;" and it is surprising how much they occasionally gain: only more wonderful still how soon they lose it again; and how little satisfaction they have in their acquisition.

We got into a tram-car one evening, to go from our Shoreditch Mission-House to Mildmay; and found ourselves seated opposite to a very well-dressed woman, who was no doubt looked upon by her fellow-travellers as a lady. She was known to us as a discharged convict; at that very time a license-holder. Her purse, a handsome morocco leather one, was in her hand, and to all appearance she was "a lady out shopping."

Without the least sign of recognising us, she stopped the car almost as soon as we sat down, and

alighted. We followed quickly, and stood on the pavement at her side.

"I thought you would do so, madam," she said ;  
"and I am glad to see you."

We inquired where she lived, and what she was doing.

"I am married, and my husband is in very delicate health. We have plenty of money ; no need now to go out."

We walked with her to her house, which was one of the best in the road, though that did not give it a good name. It was a villa of pretentious exterior, containing quantities of handsome furniture, ill-kept and incongruous in its arrangement. Bad taste and dirt combined to characterise the abode. Mr. B—— was confined to bed gasping with asthma. He responded cordially to our offer to pray with him, and speak of the Saviour. Mrs. B—— told us "they were quite religious people, called on by the clergyman ; and that whenever B—— got well they meant to go regularly to church."

We felt that there was encouragement in this case ; and promised another visit.

Some months after, in the Christmas holidays, during severe snow and frost, a terrible railway accident happened. The dead were laid in —— railway station to be identified ; and one of them

was recognised as E—— B——, the woman we had seen in the tram-car. We inquired particulars of this sad catastrophe; and learned, that the husband had died, and that she had taken an engagement on the stage, and was on her way to fulfil it, in a provincial theatre, when she met her death.

It seems not unusual for women of the higher order of criminals, whose abilities are well developed, to turn to the dramatic profession. Their qualifications lead into that line. Their success, however, has never been great. Nor is it likely to be so, even if they work the scenes *con amore*. For, even in the representation of crime, they would not be sincere and true, but would probably endeavour to falsify its picture, in order to frustrate somebody's object; and to intercept the gain of those who employ them; and, as their nature is, "spoil play" somehow.

The singular, utter, and complete failure that always, inevitably, concludes their undertakings is the most solemn certainty that they cannot, by all their human and demon-helped ingenuity, succeed in securing what they want and desire, and that for which they devote themselves to the criminal life. Alas, how dreadfully true it is that they "sell themselves for nought"! The residuum of their best combined efforts is ashes. They drink the dregs of

their cup in this world at the hand of man, and in the next have to face the fire of Divine wrath.

Some illustrations of this earthly retribution were met, in the meetings of the Mid London Branch of the Prison Mission, that were held in — Court, Holborn, during the winter of '70. They had more of romantic interest attached to them, than any that have since been carried on in our various stations.

The work there opened up to view an extraordinary state of things in the caves and dens of the earth, into which are thrust the broken remnants of shattered lives. Out of our abundant records of these, we want to show our friends some specimens. However close our analysis is of them, we can still but nibble at the edges and sides of great questions. Some of them, such as criminal heredity, we have gone into ; and, as it were, burst up the spring ; and truth has bubbled to the surface, from the depth of that deep well, in which lie hidden facts and arguments that must one day be well handled, in the light of the Christian intelligence of this day of Scriptural research. The Word of God will be found to reveal all that is needed, to direct human interests in the mysterious particulars connected with such details. It is equal to even the present emergency, of the mixture of all things vile and precious, in one mass of indescribable confusion.

It was not easy to get congregations together of the kind of people we desired. Our missionary, a most earnest man, was not an educated person; and having a disrespect for what he called "broken-down gentlemen," he was inclined to avoid them in their troubles. We had no expectation that any such were to be found among our prison friends; and were, therefore, surprised by his frequently naming them in connection with our meetings. He sometimes pointed out one, and another, who came in to them (on wet evenings generally), giving out damp as they crouched round our enormous fire, and with it exhalations of tobacco smoke and spirits that were horribly offensive.

The fire in that mission-room was an institution. It, in fact, organised the meeting. We procured a kitchen grate of the olden time, with bars that admitted of wide extension, and of great, deep caverns of glowing coals. Between the two massive "niggards," that compressed the body of fuel into the centre, there was always a fierce combustion; and it was our special pride to be well assured that no "public fire" in the neighbourhood beat it.

Without this purifier of the atmosphere, we did not venture to assemble our company. Within its rarefying influence, we had air that it was safe to breathe. Some of our friends may remember the



place; and the well-laid straw floor on which we entertained them, when they visited the little sanctuary, where the most wretched sinners found a hiding-place in the cleft of the Smitten Rock.

The "broken-down gentlemen" usually avoided any conversation with us. This was in itself a characteristic. The commonest feature of our intercourse with prisoners is their constant outflow of communication to us of every detail of their lives. These "gentlemen" pursued an opposite course. One, who came very frequently; and who was a tall, large man, used to turn his face so much round as to make his head seem set wrong way on his shoulders. We tried the expedient of "reading verses round," in order to hear the sounds of the voices of our guests; and at first this man refused to submit to the ordeal; but, at length, he yielded to a very courteous request *by a lady*—a force that always succeeded in procuring, not only civility, but often emotion.

It was remarkably so in the case to which we allude. The deep tones that uttered the words of the text which came to his turn, were broken with the disturbance of memories long suppressed. It became painful to listen to him as the chapter went round, so we made a pause at the end of a paragraph; and began to address a few words of exhortation to the audience.

There was a rustling sound in the corner where the man sat that attracted attention. All eyes looked towards him; and it seemed as if he was expected to speak. We made an encouraging sign; and he rose to his feet. There was an air of capability in his way of opening the speech that secured attention. Its preface was a vote of thanks to us for the fire; and the speaker moved it with a suitable introduction. It was seconded in a manner that showed we had several present who were not "unaccustomed to public speaking;" and it passed with acclamation. We returned thanks briefly; and begged the orator to proceed, as it was evident that he intended to do so, for he retained his standing position, and looked as if he was wound up to the pitch for a speech.

His words were not taken down, but their substance was remembered, and formed the subject of many notes. It is reproduced in as nearly as possible his own style. The personal form is so much more interesting that we try to preserve it, for the benefit of our readers.

"I was ordained in —, by the Bishop of —, and am just a ruined clergyman. My father's name must never be given to me again. I now call myself Noggs. This rhymes with my circumstances—'gone to the dogs.' My crimes I will not recapitulate. It will interest you far more

to hear what they have done to me. The men around me know that they have destroyed my credit. Not one present would believe a word I uttered on any subject whatsoever. If I called 'Fire!' in a crowded house, no one would move if he knew that it was I who cried it out. I have arrived at that moral standpoint that I don't care even for that. My mind has ceased to be interested in the opinion formed of me by my fellowmen. I can bear rebuke, and endure condemnation, without a sense of disgrace. Nothing of that sort touches me. I have got down below the level where its influence is felt. A man loses all sensations on the subject of his character, when he and his character are perishing together. When he has no ties that are formed by character, but plenty that have no such basis, then character is dead; and he slides away after it. I am not looking for 'character' now. It has no worth for me.

"If any man here thinks that I am trying to get up a character for something or other this minute—speechifying, or anything in the religious line—he wrongs me. I have no such intention. My mind is a dead, stagnant pool. No current of thought passes through it, and ruffles its surface; no breeze from a higher level disturbs its depths. I have no aspiration, no purposes, no prospects, no fears, no desires, no loves, no hates! There is

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nothing in me; and I am nothing. Yes, I have one hope—it was left in the bottom of the box when all else vanished, and there it remains. It is just this—that there soon will not be even that ‘nothing.’”

The solemn, dark man made a pause at this point.

“Oh, sir,” said a voice, “you did well to come here. There’s a word for you in the Gospel.”

“I know it,” replied the *ci-devant* clergyman. “There is not an argument in the New Testament that I have not used in preaching the Gospel to sinners; for I have preached it, and have declared free salvation to all—even to the vilest. I never was anything but an orthodox theologian; and never were my sermons impugned for false doctrine. So far as I know the present company, there are present several who have been in positions equal to, and superior to mine; and not one of them has come to his present misfortunes from ignorance, unsound reasoning, or from too limited experience of life.

“I address a lawyer. Stand up, Mr. Q.C.; and declare your mind on the subject before us.”

A short, thick man, with a good set of teeth, stood up, and made several smiles before he replied to this appeal. He looked round him, with a conciliatory manner, and said somewhat like this: “I believe we know rather too much than too

little. My fall was not from want of knowledge ; but from too much of it. Mr. Noggs knows that I don't disguise this fact. My knowledge is at the disposal of my friends. Mr. Noggs may draw freely upon it. I have nothing else to offer. It is very discursive, if it is not profound—a wide and varied field of observation has yielded me information ; and I have used it. It can hardly be called more than 'information' that I have. *But I have it.* Those who want to know anything had better apply to me. I have something to say on most subjects ; for example, the utter annihilation"—

"Don't begin any of them now," interrupted one of the other hearers, "or we shan't come to the end this week, or next. Let the doctor open his lips. He has generally something useful to tell."

Here there came on the scene a slight, tight, wiry man, with bright eyes, and dark thick eyebrows. No coat, to speak of, was on him ; for the buttons were so tight it reduced the garment to the merest covering, stretched on his frame as tightly as skin on a fruit. The wonder was how he had ever got into it, and whether he would ever get out of it.

"I—a—a—don't see the object of Mr. Q.C., or Mr. Noggs, in stating that they so fully hold to the annihilation theory. It is, to my mind, quite inconsistent with the fact of an existence—isn't it,

friends? Alive means alive, and I mean to be alive; and to look alive. We are alive, me and my friends here, and we mean to be so until we die; and we don't want that to happen just yet. Every man in this room is subject to some disease or other, and he may be taken off in a moment, unless he takes care"—

"That's it," said a disturbing voice. "What care? I'd take any kind, and any amount, that would stave off the last enemy. That's what we come here to learn about. What is to be done?"

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will save you from this dreaded and hated death, and give you a new life to enjoy with Him," we cried. "Dear men, this is what you want. The first speaker said he did not feel even a desire; then why is he here?"

"Just so. Why does he come every evening the moment the room is opened, and sit there so quietly until its close? Let his Reverence tell us that."

The original speaker rose, and replied:

"I come to get warmth, and to pass time, and I return most hearty thanks for the opportunity that has been afforded me of doing so; and also of refreshing my memory of the Scriptures. They are a grand and true revelation, as I can testify, for they describe me. Yes, me—the very identical

creature that I am—'dead in trespasses and sin.' The lady here often declares this, and it is awfully true; so we are—dead. I only wonder that she does not give up asking us to do anything. 'The dead know not anything;' and yet she keeps on urging us to 'come,' to 'go,' to 'seek,' to 'find,' to 'get,' to 'hold,' to 'look,' to 'watch,' to 'pray,' to 'praise,' to 'thank,' and to 'rejoice.' Then she tells us the very reason why we don't and why we never, never can; we are dead.

"Now, Dead-men! I'll tell you the story of my last twenty-four hours; and, then, say what of the man is left in me?

"I came out of my bed at one o'clock yesterday; and I found that I had not a penny, nor the means of getting one. My boots were gone, my hat was gone, my body-clothes were reduced to three garments; and I was literally at the last point of destitution. My landlady had frequently warned me, that when *that* happened I must go. *Now* it had come to pass. Hitherto, I had had a respectable appearance; and was fit to walk in the street; now *that* was gone. I was no longer respectable. The threat was put into execution. I was ordered to quit the house, to which I was no longer a credit. 'You used to bring in a trifle, and could eat and drink; now you don't do either, and you only sleep, a thing I won't open my house to. Sleep is one

thing, but food is another; and a man that does not eat must not live in this place.'

"In vain I represented to the woman that the bed I had hired from her was all I could pay for; and *that* only by the most wearying and superhuman exertions. My labours to procure that fourpence beggar description. I try all street dodges, call cabs, beg, borrow, and abstract—not steal. That I do not attempt; I would if I could, though."

"How do you *abstract*?"

"I accompany a hawker, and help to sell his wares. The price he puts on is his; I add a trifle, and that's mine. We both take a little by that. It is a very respectable way of business. But that must be done by men whose clothes can bear daylight. Mine, gone beyond retrieve, no longer entitle me to such an occupation. In the dark I now must wander, the time when the beasts of the city, as well as those of the forest, do rove. It was not the first time I had been reduced to night work, so I took to it; and I, simply, went to my place among the dogs, to get my meat.

"The first time you do it, it is not easy, I can tell you. The dogs resist any one but their own race putting in a claim where they are entitled; and you feel that they have a right to do so, for their place is perfectly secured to them; and they never can fall from it; they have that certainty. It is



impossible for them to get down any further than they already are, for there is nothing beneath them. For this I envied them. When it came to the point, and I was among them, and struggling with them for the prey, I really felt that I was their inferior, for the very reason that I was wresting from them what they had fairly got, and were holding lawfully. It was their right. My aggression had no authority. I was completely in the wrong place, while they were quite in their proper order. St. Paul fought with beasts at Ephesus for his life; I fought with dogs at the market, for the scraps and bones are thrown out to them on the pavement.

"Oh, dear! the way they rushed at me, and ran up my back, to snap the piece I put in my hat; and, then, tore at my coat-pocket, to wrench the morsel I hid there! I had to be very quiet with them, or they would have torn me in pieces. But I learned to take them by the smooth handle; and gently to get them to surrender anything I wished for. We have become friends now; and I manage to get what I require. They almost gits me what they know to be fit for me.

"Dogs have such instinct that they are aware of the difference between their species and ours; and they relinquish the suitable pieces to me. I have to thank their liberality, many a night, for my supper. One great, soft, brown retriever points

with his nose to a good tender paring; and knocks it over with his paw towards me, preventing others from interfering; and invariably coming to my rescue, when new curs arrive, and attack me as their natural enemy. 'Carlo,' as I've learned to call him, acts friend to me, and won't allow them to touch my share. It is always a pleasure to me to help the poor fellows, when there is any difficulty in getting bones, and such other things that they like; and they appreciate my kindness. Among the dogs I meet, as Lazarus did, the kindliness that man refuses me."

This misapplication of Scripture induced us to stop the miserable dissertation; and to turn the attention of the meeting to the better life, and its transcendent blessings, in the Lord Jesus Christ. The "man among the dogs" was not too low for Him to take up, to sit with Him on His throne. We rose up, and led a hymn to divert the company:—

"Come, sinner, to the Gospel feast;  
Oh, come without delay;  
For there is room on Jesus' breast  
For all who will obey.

"There's room in God's eternal love  
To save thy precious soul;  
Room in the Spirit's grace above  
To heal and make thee whole."

The tune was "Auld Lang Syne," and its touch-

ing refrain was taken up by voices that had once known harmonies, for the melody was treated with all its chords; and in the performance there was an amount of musical knowledge, that is rarely present in our mission choruses.

The gentlemen's education had not lacked that training. We have been told, that we had school teachers in our congregations, but it was never known to us. However, we had musicians. The softening influence of sweet sounds were often employed with success, to reach the hardest hearts; and, now, we sought the same blessing, with confidence that we should soon see the glory of God.

"If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see," is the promise of the Lord. It is our unbelief that hinders the manifestation of His glory, in the conversion of souls.

When the singing was ended, we announced that, after the next prayer, the meeting would be closed. The missionary who usually waited for us, had gone home; and we should have to go through the dangers of that condemned quarter of the town alone. We prayed with eyes shut; and did not perceive that the men, one after another, were leaving the room, until only two or three remained. The rustling of those who left from the front seats disturbed us; and we saw that no one but Mr.

Noggs retained his place; and that he was deeply absorbed in contemplating the progress of the fire towards exhaustion.

We went over to him and said, "Will you not come to the Gospel feast?"

There was no answer. The man stood up; and accompanied us out into the dark, narrow entry that led into old N—— Street. It was crowded with men, women, and children.

"These are human dogs," he muttered. "I prefer the canine animal."

We were unable to get rid of the man's company; and we knew that it must be the Lord's will that it should be endured. We reached Holborn. No cab, and no omnibus, appeared in sight. We walked vigorously towards the West End. At Mudie's we crossed over, and he followed. The shops were beginning to close.

"Do you want food?" we said to our now very close companion.

"I want that food—the Gospel feast," he said; "and I must have it."

The man was so savage, that it was awful to hear him speak, in such a manner, of the free grace of the God of love. A cake-shop was shining brightly, and we turned in, and motioned him to follow.

"That I cannot do," he muttered. "The light is too great—my horrible state. It is fearful. What

a condition for a man—degraded below the dogs Lady, don't you see why I like them best? They don't disrespect me. They do me the honour to beat me. I wish some Christian would do the same. It would be a relief—indeed it would.”

The man was morbid. He had reached the lowest stage of human degradation. We could not bear the interview; and yet we knew it must go on until he was saved. Ay, saved! We believed that he would be; and that in a few minutes! We turned out again into the comparatively dark street; and joined our now intensely interesting companion, who was being born into the kingdom of God!

“We will not speak a word to you—only pray. The Spirit will do all. He is struggling with you. Let Him work.”

“Pray on,” he answered. “Oh, pray the Lord to have mercy on me!”

Oxford Street slipped behind us. We arrived at the Circus. Here cabs abounded; but we did not want one.

Always cowardly at a crossing; and especially in the dark, we knew nothing, at that moment, of the terrors of going from one side of Regent Street to the other. It was done; and, yet, the privilege of the walk was perceptibly increasing. There was a long silence: we felt that Jesus was the Conqueror; and that “it was well” with the soul of the man

who had been "among the dogs." He was eating of the crumbs of the feast of which we had sung.

He would soon eat the children's bread. It was a glorious experience! The moon's rays began to pierce the gloom of the street; and to make the gas lamps ashamed. We felt our exceeding nothingness, in the presence of Him who was taking away this "heart of stone," and giving "a heart of flesh." We expected tenderness to gush out, and it did :

"O lady! you must walk no more. The Lord has done it! Praise His Name! I know He found me 'among the dogs,' and has taken me up in His arms like a child. I rest on His promises. They are all love—His tenderness is wonderful. Jesus will be all mine; for I am His—He will not leave me outside 'among the dogs.' Good-night, lady. Praise God!"

The man went his way and we ours. Our household rejoiced at the news that we brought home; and the voice of joy and thanksgiving resounded in our family worship that night. It was the entrance of a great light into a dark place, the birth of a new member into the family of faith. The struggle had been severe, but the travail was over; Christ was formed in the sinner's heart by faith!

We know very little more of the man from "among the dogs." He was heard of in a workhouse;

and is now supposed to be dead ; but there was a testimony borne by both his friends, the lawyer and the doctor, that he had again become the Reverend Mr. Noggs ; and had preached and prayed wherever he could get any one to listen to him. "The night that he was so bitter on life ; and told his experience 'among the dogs,' was the turning-point," they said.

We heard something further of the dogs. A woman who had had many imprisonments ; and whose change of life was very marked, had recently become comfortable in her circumstances ; and we had been told much of the improvement in her home, and in everything connected with her. We plead guilty to having had some suspicions of her honesty, when we heard of her having a "home ;" and putting together goods and chattels ; and we resolved to pay her a visit. One evening we took our way to her lodgings ; and found, to our regret, that she was out, at an hour when every honest woman ought to be at home.

We had made many rules in our mind, as to the code of regulations by which the conduct of women who had lapsed from morals ought to be treated. One of them was the keeping of good hours. We had timed our visit to test her propriety in this respect.

Louisa was from home. We were asked to wait ;

and we accepted a seat, in a little shop next door to her house. The counter had some of the dainty fare of the poor on it, sausages, pork-pies, &c. ; and the old woman behind the counter began to make gestures to us of an intelligent kind, when customers entered, and bought the good things, and carried them away.

"She is a rare hand at them," said the dealer. We had not realised that it was Louisa's powers that were being extolled, when she herself entered the shop. Her surprise at seeing us was so great, that she dropped the things she was carrying in her apron, all about the floor of the shop. We stooped to help to gather them up. They were all little pieces of meat. All sorts of flesh that is used for food, and sold in the shambles, were there.

"Have you been 'among the dogs,' taking away their supper?" we asked.

"The dogs, ma'am! If you call people dogs that goes like me to buy scraps at twopence a pound, then I have been there. But the dogs were all on two legs, and looked as like men and women as we do."

"Where did you buy these for twopence a pound?"

"At the market; and a good job they saves them to sell to us, not as they used to, just brush them out on the pavement, and let the dogs have them.



I've heard tell it was a frightful sight—men struggling with the animals for the good bits! None of that was seen to-night. I went to the door; and there was a lot of baskets, and men weighing the scraps out. I took my choice of some of them, and handed up the pieces to be weighed. 'Eight pound,' he says, and I pays down my one and fourpence, and gets my meat, and comes home as quick as I could."

"You have very short measure for eight pound in that quantity," we remarked.

"So I have," was the reply; "for I sold three pounds on the way to a woman I met, who saw me looking at my stock, and judging what I could do with it, to mix it up profitably. 'I'm tired, and weak, and sickly; can you sell me three pounds to save me going all the way to the market, and perhaps finding it closed?'

"'With pleasure,' I answered, 'for the doors would be shut before you could get there, and I'm glad to serve you.'

"She paid me a little for my trouble, and there it is, sixpence for the meat and one penny to me."

"That's too small a profit; but we are glad you have not had to fight with dogs; that's very blessed. How true the Lord is to His word. He provides for you in this way!"

"Surely He does. The dogs are sent away; and

we are given the food. I believe that there's a great blessing in those scraps of meat, ma'am ; it humbles you so to take them—everybody's leavings ! I was once so proud that I would not have touched them ; I, in my sin and folly, would have left them to the dogs. They were the devourers of what was wanted for human beings ; God has delivered the market from them. They are not now permitted to be destroying and tearing good food there ; we have the advantage of it."

We were reminded of the lesson, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." How often do we give of the Lord's substance to the wasters ; and, so, defraud the children of their bread ! We permit many things "to go to the dogs" that, husbanded with care and thrift, would nourish the poor of the flock, and promote the kingdom and glory of the Lord.

Our God is not a destroyer, but a Saviour. He saves His own from destruction and delivers them from "the power of the Dog."

To this we could render a glorious testimony. Our friend Louisa added her word.

"It is a fine sight, ma'am, to go to the market when the poor are there. They are always a crowd ; and they are so particular, weighing and measuring before they buy ;—sometimes longing for a lot that is too dear for them, or too unprofitable ; and making

the most of their money. I said to myself to-night, 'If we was really anxious and in earnest about heavenly food, how well we would be fed with the Word of God, and have exactly the right part to hand when we wanted it, for our help and guidance.'

How I had misjudged this woman! Surely she had nothing to do with the dogs, for He had "put her among the children;" and "fed her with honey out of the stony rock;" "satisfied her soul abundantly;" and "made her glad" with the good things of the kingdom.

We doubt not but that our friend who had been "among the dogs" was dealt with in like manner; and had enjoyed, in his workhouse home, "a feast of fat things;" and grew thereby.

Nor could we refuse to see how the same tender, loving Father was, by this very leading of His providence, giving us support and encouragement in our mission. Here was one sent to tell us, that the dogs were gone; and to comfort us concerning the poor, for whom He was making provision.

## CHAPTER VI.

" I cannot weep ! I dare not pray !  
The very source of tears is dry !  
And what—when hope is lost for aye—  
Avails the prayer of agony ?  
A dark cloud lowers before mine eye—  
A chain is twined around my heart—  
I cannot pierce that clouded sky—  
I cannot tear those bonds apart.

While with resistless pangs I strive,  
As never guilty wretch hath striven ;  
A voice, whene'er I shriek, ' Forgive !'  
Replies, ' Thou canst not be forgiven.'  
I know not if from hell or heaven,  
That voice of vengeance comes and came ;  
But on my heart its words are graven  
In characters of living flame.

Ye guilty joys ! whose transient glow  
I pledged my forfeit soul to share ;—  
Where are your false illusions now ?  
Your evanescent transports, where ?  
Alas ! the only fruits ye bear,  
For which I dared my heaven resign,  
Are death, and darkness, and despair :—  
Shall these my doom for ever sign ?"



## CHAPTER VI.

THE *brigand*, and the highwayman, whose fame for generous deeds is so great as almost to cast a certain charm of romance over their evil doings, and make them heroes instead of criminals, are not types of the men who compose the "dangerous classes" of the present day. Our "lapsed masses" are very degenerate, if, indeed, their predecessors are represented by Robin Hood and the "merrie men" of Sherwood Forest.

But there is really no relationship between the freebooters of a by-gone generation, or the lawless tribes of an unsettled territory, and the people who, in the midst of Christian civilisation, have the privilege of scriptural teaching; and, yet, who commit crimes, at risk of any penalty, for the mere pleasure of the act. They are of a wholly different class, or rather, they are the development of a low form of lawlessness. One is not surprised to find

in them small evidence of the higher range of sentiments and feelings.

Benevolence is not quite absent from our criminals, although they do not manifest much of it. Impulsive acts of kindness are not uncommon among them; alas! often to be obliterated by the reaction of violence and anger. Gratitude sometimes gleams in the darkness of their self-indulgence; but it is not of such a nature, as to be a reliable defence against their making victims of known and acknowledged friends. Such, however, as it is, it is noteworthy. We can cite instances of it that interest us much; and afford evidence of a power that may be used beneficially among them.

In connection with our Prison Mission work in Nine Elms Laundry, we have had many events that illustrate the awakening of grateful feelings from time to time, but none more vividly than that which is recorded in one of our reports about the sending home of the washing to the sick.

The "Nine Elms Laundry Van" is well known to be the messenger of the Prison Mission, going its rounds from place to place daily, carrying to and fro the clothes of the sick and needy, the washing of which provides employment for women discharged from prison, that they may earn an honest living. One of its stages is at the door

of an Hospital, which is in close proximity to a "defile," formerly in the possession of criminals, but lately opened to the general public. When the van stood at this spot, on the day that the event we are about to narrate happened, it was laden with clean clothes, which it was about to deliver to a similar Institution, where relief to the sick is given to the greatest extent, and of the most valuable kind. Of these, a parcel containing necessities required for immediate use, and always prepared as rapidly as steam and hands can work, was at the back of the van. During the driver's absence, assisting to carry into the hall of the hospital a basket too large and heavy for the attendants, this parcel was stolen!

Its value was paid to the Institution that owned it, out of the hard-earned funds of the Nine Elms Laundry, which by so much was at a loss. The fact that such an action was done, at such a place, just where protection might have been expected, told a sad tale. We, of course, heard various versions of the "mistake" that occurred.

"He was so long in prison that he did not know the van, or he would not have touched it," we were told.

"Then it was a man who took it?" we said.

"Who else would do such a thing?" was the reply. "Women that have had a day's work



on the clothes would protect it; and many a hundred in that street has had a lift through their means; and would not be so ungrateful as to injure the place, nor make it lose a penny-piece, beside the folly of hurting *one's own wash-house*. It's ours, and no one else's. Never a woman that is not a thief washes a rag there; and not a soul gets a farthing out of it but *themselves*; so I say, why should we put a finger on it, to rob it? Dog don't eat dog. It's a crying shame to hear of such a thing ever happening!"

Sympathy of a similar kind, from many such friends, was effusively bestowed on us. It manifested a very peculiar appreciation of our work; and, no doubt, the popular feeling of the class is in our favour; but there always are, in every community, individuals who do not obey the general observances; and the society of robbers is not exempt from this inconvenience. It is often complained by them that the old saying, about "honour among thieves," is not verified in the present generation of criminals.

A few years ago, we had proof of the consideration in which such people hold their patronesses. A lady belonging to the Prison Mission had her pocket picked of some papers; and they were returned to her; and the thief was brought up by his peers for judgment! Shawl-pins and

brooches are frequently returned ; and it is not uncommon to hear of sparing mercy being extended to those who visit these haunts, because they belong to their "own Mission;" and come to befriend them.

One evening, a gentleman who had occasionally preached in our little mission-room in —— Court, to audiences of discharged prisoners, had his pocket picked in the street; and, when he arrived at his home, he was called to speak to a woman on the door-step. She presented him with the contents of his pocket, which included a letter, and some papers of value, along with a costly Bagster's Bible, which would have sold for several shillings.

"We are not so bad, after all," said the poor sinner. "I did not like to drink a Bible; least of all, one that ever was sent to save my soul, as yours was. It was my husband took it, while I was looking the other way. I knew you, and when he gave me the things to sell, I ran off with them to you. He will be angry with me for losing them, so I must tell him a lie about it."

"Don't do that," said the gentleman. "Why not let him know of your virtuous gratitude?"

"Because he has no idea of suchlike good as you do. He understands you giving him clothes or money, but not preaching; that he makes no ac-

count of, and would not let me treat it as if it was anything at all. I know better. There's nothing else to compare to it, for all other things don't last. When they are eat up, or drunk up, what are you the better? but we can't come to the end of the blessing that the Bible can give us. That's why I think so much of the preachers, and why I did not let your Bible be drunk by our pals."

Our memory supplies other instances of careful consideration for our interests by the members of our class. Advice not to wear jewellery, and too good dresses, when working in their districts, was early given us.

"Miss W—— had better not wear her sealskin jacket at our meeting, and leave it on the back of her chair, tempting us," was a remark to which due attention was paid.

"I wonder that any lady would open her bag, and take out a purse full of money, and pay us for our work, and then put back the purse in the bag, and leave it on the table, and walk away to the other end of the room. It was hard to prevent some of the new hands from meddling with it," we were told.

"It is really dangerous to wear rings, ladies," said a great authority among thieves. "If we were not under a compliment to you, we would have them off in a jiffy."

"Off my finger?" exclaimed a surprised hearer.

"Yes, and the finger wrung off with it, *if the diamonds was worth it!*"

At the turning off —— Street into "—— Gardens" there has been considerable alteration in the houses at each side of the narrow passage that opens into —— Court. There is a great wall of handsome brickwork along one side, with which the Board School has adorned the locality; and opposite to it the large houses are very much cleaner than they formerly used to be.

"Great improvements have come to pass about here," we said to a Prison friend whom we happened to meet there.

"D'ye think so, ma'am?"

"It looks so," we replied; "but if you are doubtful, we must be so too, for you have more knowledge of the place than we have."

"Mrs. B—— lives here," said he, "and she don't dislike you—rather took to Miss S—— and the Prison Mission; and now goes in for a meeting in the parlour on Sunday evenings. The preachers don't know what sort of chaps are there—calls 'em 'working men'—it tickles 'em to be asked to tea as sich; and they goes!" Here the speaker enjoyed the joke which he thought he had made.

"Have not some turned out to be 'working

men ;' and gone to respectable employment, as soon as they could get it ? ”

“ Well, I b'lieve they have—many has done better since the missions opened down here ; and the man you're looking for is one of 'em.”

We came to the foot of a steep staircase leading to a workshop over a timber store.

“ You ain't as young as you was once, ma'am, so you'd better spare yourself a climb if you can. I'll run up first and call Jim down.”

The messenger returned. Jim was above, but down he could not come. He had a glue-pot boiling over, and he must set it on something safe ; but, of all things, he wished us to go up, to see his honest endeavour to earn a living.

The ascent was not very difficult, and the effort was well repaid.

“ Old chairs to mend ” Jim had in great variety ; and other things too. He had had several imprisonments, and was a short, thin, sickly, nervous man. The colour of his skin and hair was the same, and both were at the moment so very dirty, as to be scarcely recognizable for light brown—the complexion so common among criminals. The man was scarcely thirty-five years old ; and, yet, he was wrinkled, and worn ; and had no youth left in him.

“ Indeed, I am glad to see you, my lady, I am

truly. I do work. Don't you see how I am slaving to get sixpence? That's all I will be paid for mending these three chairs, and that stool, and the birdcage, and the child's cot. I'm telling the truth—you can hardly believe it, of course! It's a horrid shame, but, you know old G——, the Jew, in —— Street, he has no heart in him; he gets it out of me. I work for him—does his mending leastways”——

“Is not this much better than stealing?”

“Not in the doing, ma'am—oh, no, that can't be; but in the end it is. That I will admit. I have learned that—so I have.”

The man perspired at every pore of his face, as he went on coating with glue a piece of wood, which he applied to the side of the cot.

“That won't stick very long together,” I remarked.

“It is not meant to do. I want to have it back, and back, as often as I can; and so does the master.”

“This is not honest mending,” I remarked.

“I don't suppose it is, ma'am; but I can't do better; don't find fault with me. It is a good job that I am at it at all. I wonder at myself many a time. I am very far behind in my religion. I only know that there's a Saviour for me; and I trust Him.”

"Then, you must try to be holy as He is. He commands His people to give good weights and measure; and to do as they would be done by."

Jim's face was a study. He seemed preparing a poser for me.

"Who does *that*, I'd very much like to know? I'm afraid I can't believe that *anybody* does. The holiest man or woman ever I saw did not, ever and always, do what is right—nor say the truth plain, straight and full."

"We won't argue that, but we will hear what God's book says, Jim. Turn to the fourth chapter of the Ephesians, and read what the new man is to be, and to do. Have you a Bible?"

"Oh, yes, I'm not without that; and I know what you mean. I am to put away lying—that is my bit of scheming here; and for all that I don't; and, yet, I'd like—I'm sure I would—to be what I ought to be."

The man's face grew grave. "God help me," he said, "I mean it, I intend it. I would be good, but I am so bad; yes, that's it, I am bad at heart still."

We knelt together, poor Jim and ourselves, and we prayed that he might be enabled, by God's Spirit, to resist the temptation to cheat his customers, and to give them bad work; and that he might mend his chairs well, and do everything

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as unto the Lord; who sees into the workshop; and try to do the work, as if He was there watching how the glue and the nails were used.

My visit was one of inquiry. I asked where a woman was, whose children interested me.

"I wish I knew, ma'am. She's my sister. Ah, we was bad brought up! No school was got for us."

Jim had now done his job of work, and he very deftly packed the chair, the cot, and the birdcage into one mass, and put them on his head.

"This is the way I carries them," he said. "Will you go downstairs, and I'll follow, ma'am, and we'll go to Mrs. B——, and ask the last news of poor Jenny?"

With my industrious friend, I got admittance to a very large house, outside the door of which he set down his burden. The windows and doors of the house were all open, and from them leaned and talked, men and women, who appeared to pass the day in leisure and carelessness, if not in pleasure. Mrs. B—— appeared in the hall. She invited us in, and was warmly interested in us.

"I will be open with you, ma'am, for now I know all about you, and I respect you. It don't matter a bit to you whether a person is good or bad, you befriend them all the same; and if they turn out ever so ungrateful, you don't give



them up, but goes after them, seemingly without any encouragement whatsoever. Surely there's enough of 'em gone back to prison to daunt you from doing any more; but you don't know when you're beat. You'll never give over the Missions; and if you did, more would start up, and keep along at it. I understand it now; I did not when you first came here, and had your little room next the blacksmith's forge; and bore all the hammering and noise. I really thought we should drive you away by annoying you; but you didn't mind, on you went—persevering. I used to be afraid you'd take away my women; and ruin my business. I see that is not what you want to do; and I know your work will never do it. My work is too strong for you. You only want *souls*; you don't care to meddle with us, so long as one and another gets saved. Some do, no doubt, but the most come to and fro, and are very shaky every way. They go awhile to meetings, and then they fall away awhile. All the time they must live somewhere, and I am better to them now than I used to be; for I let them be good here if they like; and I'm glad if they can keep so. I even give my parlour for meetings, and I sing the hymns. Some day I'll be one of them myself, I do believe. Yes, Jesus died for me, bad as I am."

Poor Mrs. B—— wept, and shook my hand.

"Jim, you are really turned round. He don't drink now; look how thin he is, and he shakes so. I think the poor lad is in a consumption."

Jim was very much solemnised; and he said: "Mrs. B——, you are a good friend to me, and lends me sixpence many a time; tell what you know about M——."

"Must I, indeed — oh, must I? Hadn't I better not. She's your own sister, you know. Think, Jim."

"I've thought," he answered. "I'll let the Mission know. It will be safe as the ground."

Mrs. B—— drew very close, and whispered, "You read in the papers about the trial of —— for the—worst thing (with a groan)—that's she."

We spoke no more for some minutes.

"There is still time for her to be saved," we said, "and the offer of salvation is made to her, we are assured. We will pray for her."

We knelt down, but we noticed that Mrs. B—— left the room, and we waited for her to return. She came in again, accompanied by a young woman and child; and we began to pray, the new arrivals kneeling with us.

"This is *her* daughter, and grandchild, and they can put up a prayer too," said Mrs. B——; "the child's father is away for ten years, and the mother keeps on the business."

Telling very simply to the loving Jesus all the sad, sad tale, that we knew was on their hearts, we implored that every one of them might be saved; and meet in heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ. When we rose from our knees, the old woman wept very much. "Is it for this that I am so fond of them all; why must they go and get condemned like this? I'm afraid you won't see many of us up above; and this I know, that you don't spoil my business down here; for it is as good as ever it was (more shame to it!) Your Mission has not done it a bit of harm; and I'll be ever glad to see you, ma'am, and to have a prayer with you. After so many years, we can't but be good friends—us and you."

There were two women, who were no longer young, and who had frequented our mission-room, sitting on the ground outside the door, holding conversation with a person in the cellar. They stood up, and smiled, as we said, "Still here, my friends?"

"Yes, ma'am, off and on. We do a bit of work sometimes, but more often not. How is ——'s girl? Do you ever see —— and ——? Their daughters will be grown now. It is a good thing they were taken away," one added.

The mother of a child that we had rescued, who is now a respectable servant, came round the

corner into the court, at this moment, terribly intoxicated. She set up a fierce cry ; and threatened us with every sort of violence if we did not "at once deliver up her darling E—— to her, and take ourselves out of that." But, before we could remonstrate, she had changed her note ; and was disposed to embrace us ; and had to be borne off indoors by her friends, while she vociferated, "I only want to thank God, and the lady. Let me kneel down and be grateful."

We got through the narrow passage that led to the nearest thoroughfare, as quickly as we could ; and saw Jim balancing his load on his head, and rapidly pursuing his way to the old furniture shop where he was employed.

It is a great difficulty to provide men with work who have not earned a character. We are disposed to restrict the employment of such men as Jim to labour in connection with machinery. They require to be regulated by mechanical contrivance. The organisation of a system for this purpose is a duty that some Christians must perform.

At this moment, there is a man and wife, both of whom have been most successful in their criminal life. They have been recently liberated from long imprisonment.

The man became in prison very clever at brush-making; he was taught to work a machine, which is most profitable in the business. He is promised constant employment; and he is very anxious to prove both his ability and willingness to be industrious. The wife has got work as the manager of a machine room in a sewing factory; and is conducting herself most satisfactorily. Her wages are but scanty; and the strain of privation is very severe upon people who have been accustomed to indulge themselves for years in every way.

On the Derby day this year, a lady called at their lodgings, and found them at home; and the wife striving hard to finish a task of work. They were undergoing a hard test with wonderful courage, determined that nothing should induce them to surrender to the enemy, and be tempted to attend the "ring" or the "booth;" or even to venture out of doors, to hear the news of the day. They declared that it would set them off "as a drop of drink does a drunkard."

Such persons require the same kind of stimulus that the pledge provides for total abstainers, in order to keep up the ideal of moral duty in their hearts. There is no hope of "reforming" them, but it would help them to do better, or, as they call it, "go on the square." This phrase is very

expressive of their lack of a conscientious standard of conduct.

The moral "square" of a plain, common man, who regards his neighbour from the ordinary standpoint of humanity is very different from the crooked, uneven thought-line of the criminal, who sees in him a person to be treated, not as his will or his power dictate, but as he knows, by his own experience, it is his duty and his interest to do to him. Therefore, we do not expect, and we do not find, any certain appreciation of the honesty that characterise men, who have no propensity to attain their ends by devious courses, instead of by ordinary work; and by such respect for the interests of others, as they demand for their own.

"All are not just because they do no wrong;  
But he, who will not wrong me when he may,  
He is the truly just. I praise not those  
Who in their petty dealings pilfer not,  
But him, whose conscience spurns at secret fraud,  
When he might plunder and defy surprise.  
His be the praise, who, looking down with scorn  
On the false judgment of the partial herd,  
Consults his own clear heart, and boldly dares  
To be, not to be thought, an *honest* man."

The absence of general humanity makes the difficulty of dealing with criminals so extremely remarkable. Obstacles to arriving at an understanding with them are so numerous and various

that they are hydra-headed; as fast as one is got rid of another rises in its place; and, like the Augean stable, one's task is never done.

It is a truth that

“Such is the fate of guilt, to make slaves tools,  
And then to make them masters.”

In the struggle of human reason, the criminal always has the victory. He fences and parries all its attacks, and successfully resists conviction of truth by it. The power of the Holy Spirit of God can alone convince him of sin.

## CHAPTER VII.

“Oh ! that my load of sin were gone !  
Oh ! that I could at last submit  
At Jesus’ feet to lay it down,  
To lay my soul at Jesus’ feet !

When shall mine eyes behold the Lamb,  
The God of my salvation see ?  
Weary, O Lord, Thou know’st I am ;  
Yet still I cannot come to Thee.

Rest for my soul I long to find :  
Saviour ! if mine indeed Thou art,  
Give me Thy meek and lowly mind,  
And stamp Thine image on my heart.

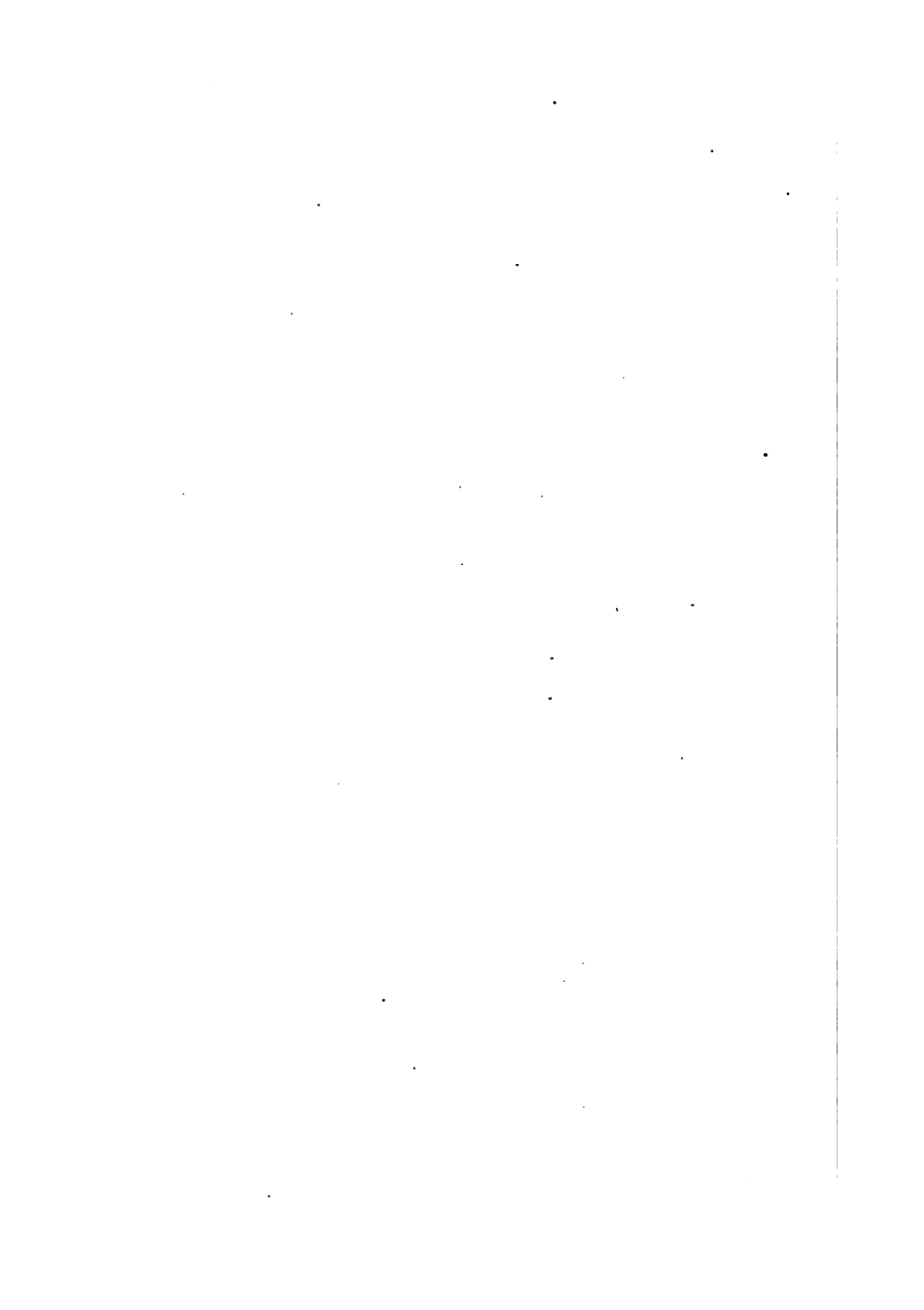
Break off the yoke of inbred sin,  
And fully set my spirit free ;  
I cannot rest till pure within,  
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.

Fain would I learn of Thee, my God ;  
Thy light and easy burden prove,  
Thy cross, all stained with hallowed blood,  
The labour of Thy dying love.

I would—but Thou must give the power,  
My heart from every sin release ;  
Bring near, bring near, the joyful hour,  
And fill me with Thy perfect peace.”

—CHARLES WESLEY.





CHAPTER VII.

ONE of the most remarkable things about criminals is their abjectness. They drop into lowliest humiliation where they are true to Self. The father of one of the little girls in the Village Homes came to inquire about his child's welfare; and the lady to whom he spoke assured him not only of her being in good health, but of her excellent conduct; and she added, what she thought would be pleasant news—

“All the girls turn out well. Not one that was sent early to the Homes has ever been convicted of a crime.”

The man wiped his head with his handkerchief, and seemed quite faint.

“You take me down flat,” he said; “it is too much to think of. I could never have hoped it.”

On an occasion when a great act of kindness was done, by freely pardoning a very ungrateful course of conduct, and by repeating favours that were entirely unmerited, the recipient was so overcome as to be very much affected physically;

and, notwithstanding efforts to conceal it, an unmistakable effect was visible. Emotions affect such persons very much indeed. The facts known to those who have intercourse with them, in their intervals of freedom, do not differ from those that occur in the experience of the prison officials; but the use made of the knowledge gained by the latter, is not apparent in the treatment of the offenders when they are in custody.

If notice were taken of the highly characteristic phenomena commonly betrayed in prison, it might lead to better direction of the prisoner's feelings and conduct. The officers that are closely in contact with female offenders are not usually intelligent about these matters. They are generally women of little education, and are not trained for their work by any probationary course. They enter on it as a *terra incognita*; and, while they are learning their way, the prisoners suffer all the brunt of their wanderings and disappointments.

The result is lamentable. Many offences come from the ignorant and powerful action of the officers on their charges.

"You are preparing for discharge, are you?" said a warder, as she passed a woman in a corridor, who, waiting with breathless impatience for the word of command to go, in nervous trepidation turned the wrong way at a certain point. In-

stantly a hard hand pushed her towards the proper quarter. Although it was an impulse towards liberty, the prisoner was annoyed; and, with mutterings, went in the right direction.

On a recommitment to the same prison, the warder had a threat of personal violence from her, "because you put your hand to me when I was only frightened, and not a bit out of the way."

Memory never fails to record the wounds of pride; and they do not cure, but aggravate, what may be considered the mental disorder of prisoners. Criminals are victims to the most acute pride. It is their mania. No one who knows anything of the philosophy of the human mind, expects to alter its current by exciting opposition to the course in which it runs.

"Miss G—— thinks a great deal of me. I believe she don't think I ever do the things they accuses me of; and I really try to be good while I am with her. It is a pity to let her know what I am," said a woman, speaking of a well-known lady superintendent, whom she fancied that she duped. Her desire to please this official produced "good prison conduct;" but it did not go any further, for on liberation her natural state was returned to, and it was most disorderly. When met in a low den of criminals, and exhorted to consider "what Miss G—— would feel if she

saw where her friend 'the good prisoner' lived," the reply was : " It would open her eyes, and make her know what we like to do. Perhaps she'd be better able to punish us next time she gets us under lock and key."

" She has no temper," said another, speaking of the same lady. " Not enough of it to give one a ' rise,' just to have a chance to be contradictory, and take a start up."

" But you would be soon put down, and made to feel the power over you."

" Well, even so, ma'am ; it's better than that ever and ever going on so deadly quiet as she does."

" You have Mrs. ———, who gives you many an opportunity to be rude. I suppose you prefer to have her to deal with."

" We do ; but it is not for our good. It is the bad that is brought to the top by her that suits us best, only she did not ought to stir it up."

" You get well punished in her prison."

" That's true. It is a word and a blow with her. She talks about ' her women ' as if we, in a sort of way, were belonging to the prison more than to the rest of the world ; and *though it is true*, she has no business to be saying it. ' My women, who come back and forward here,' she keeps telling the director, ' are such good workers ; ' and we, listening to her, who do as little as we can all day,

*and she knows it*, getting praise we don't deserve ! She thinks that pleases us, and makes us like her. It is just the other way ! it turns us against her ; we see through her mean ways. Then, she's the woman to lay on a heavy punishment for next to nothing, the minute after she has given us such good characters : speaking very pleasant to your face—' Oh, poor thing, you are to be pitied ; '—and then getting a full history of you out of the warder ; and ordering you into the dark, and leaving you to wonder whether she means to kill or cure you, is her way of managing prisoners."

" Do any ever get cured ? "

" Not by these means if they do. I have heard of women being changed, but it takes all the time they live to know if it will last. There's no use *in prison* that I know of, but there is use in treatment. I've been bettered by people who never had anything to do with prison, and still they showed they downright hated my ways, and would not have me in their house at any price. One lady told me that she wished me well, but far from her family. ' We are respectable,' she said ; ' and there is plenty of room in other places for those who are not ; ' quietly letting me see she knew the difference between good and bad. Those are the people that do right by us.

" Miss A——, that keeps the big lodging-house

and wants cheap servants, always has convicts, because they go for low wages; and she tries to make them believe they are the same as other people, to get them to like her, and work for her. 'You can be as good as any girl in the world if you wish, and do as well as the best;' *but she knows the difference*, that it is not so. People say these kind of things for a purpose, to suit themselves, and to make use of us for their own profit, and not for our good; but we never are imposed upon, for we understand them well, and it makes us harder than ever, our own way, when we find that other people, who are reckoned to be all right and square, are not so good as they put up to be. This gives us a reason for not pretending to be improved, for it is no use only having outside respectability; and sometimes it makes us think that there is no *real* goodness at all, and that every one except ourselves is only pretending; and thus we become proud of our honesty! Yes, indeed, honesty! We are that; and no make-believe nor humbug, but, out and out, the same, within and outside."

"This is confusion of mind, and you need to have very plain, straightforward, open dealing. When you get it, how does it affect you?"

"We fly away from it, for it is impossible to endure it, unless we submit, and give ourselves up

to what is right. It is the best thing for us to be made come to a point once for all, if we can be induced to do so ; then we are, indeed, conquered."

"By this conquering, do you mean made able to do well?"

"No, but *wishing* to do so ; and then we want to be made able, what God alone can do. While we can persuade people that we are what we are not, we never want to be any better ; but when the day comes that exposes us to every one, and we can no longer be hidden, we are driven to look for the mercy of God to cleanse us."

"Then it postpones your repentance, and your turning to the Saviour, to be treated as if you were not in special need of His help."

"I don't know that, for we don't go to Him the more, nor the less, for what any one says or does. It is all as it may be—this way. When religion comes, it is a thing by itself. No matter what way it attacks you, you go to the One who is able to bless you, for it is from Him the call comes, and He it is that wants you, and loves you, and has no wish nor desire but to save you. He is only a Saviour, and not a task-master. This is what I believe of Jesus. He will deliver me when I go to Him, not to be the better of me, but only to save me from misery ; not for His good, for He don't gain nor lose, but just to bless me ; and that



is not like men. How different *it* is ! The love of God is pure, and all other is just for *self*—self—nothing else !”

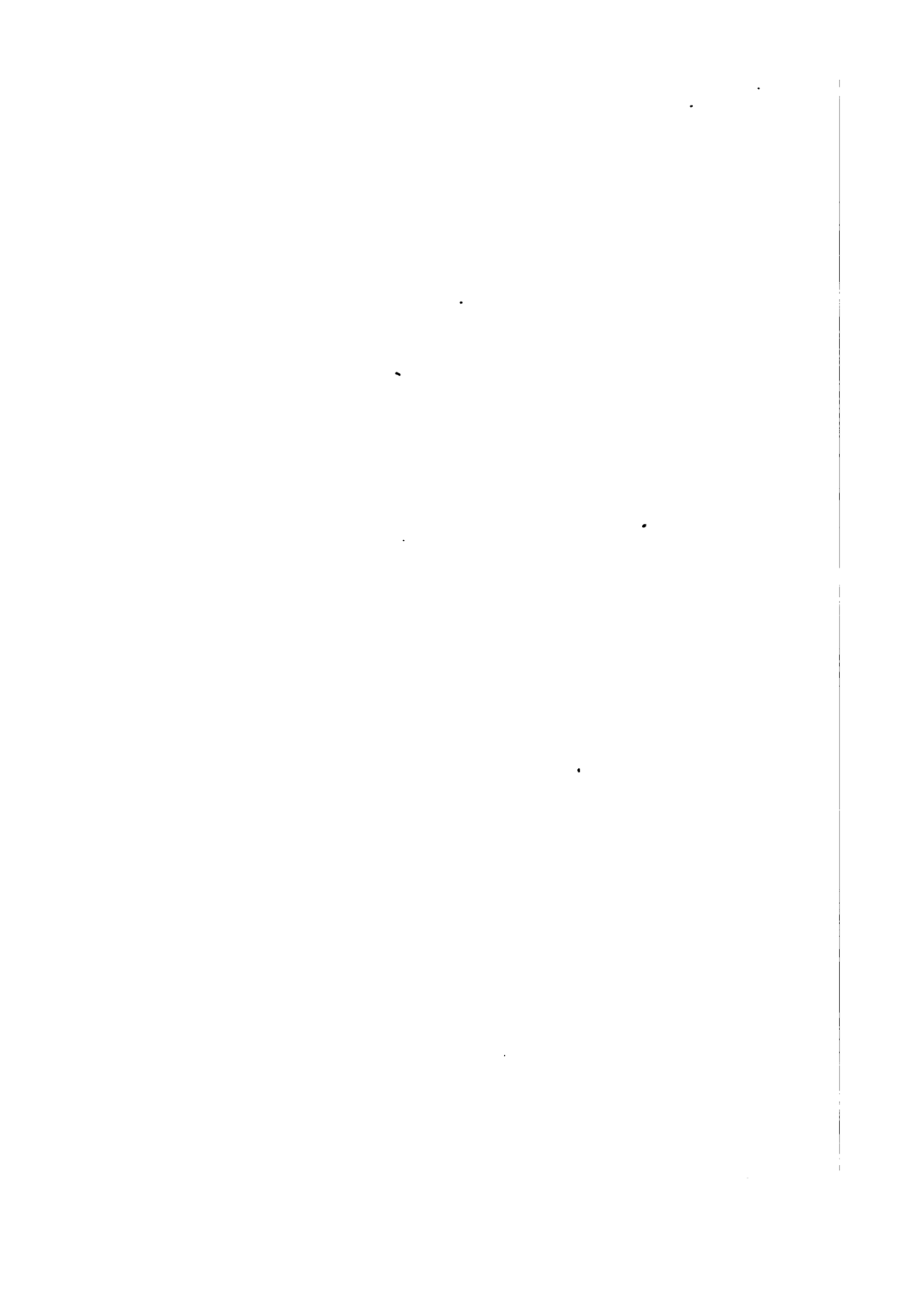
This explanation of “wondrous love,” which bears very powerful evidence to the effect of simple gospel truth, was given us by an old offender. The story of the Divine, ineffable condescension wins hearts with a power that no human attraction can command. Criminals are quick to perceive motives. Even in childhood they have the same characteristic.

There is a form of transgression committed by their teachers that some of them have detected; and have mentioned with censure. The following remark has been made to us by a child :—

“Miss —— did try hard to get me to please her ! But I don’t care to please them that can only punish me for a while. It is all the same what they do to me. I can go through it ; and it must come to an end sometime. She did not ask me to do it to please God ; there would have been some reason in that. No, she only said that I was to show I loved *her* by doing as *she* liked. I knew she was not teaching me what she ought. She should have told me *to do it because it was right* ; and *that if I did right*, I would show that I loved the Lord Jesus, who died for me. Surely, if I do the thing that is

right, that will please God ; and if He is pleased Miss —— will be pleased. I do wonder she don't know better than try to make us like her first, and God second.

The child's comment on a common mode of dealing with evil, made a deep impression on us ; and we give it here, as illustrating the difficulty of working among criminals of all ages.



## CHAPTER VIII.

“ The instrument of instruments, the *hand* ;  
Courtesy's index ; chamberlain to nature ;  
The body's soldier ; and mouth's caterer ;  
Pysche's great secretary ; the dumb's eloquence ;  
The blind man's cradle, and his forehead's buckler ;  
The minister of wrath ; and friendship's sign.”

—SINGUA.



## CHAPTER VIII.

SOMETIME ago, passing through one of the most notorious of the London criminal districts, we saw in a shop window, exposed for sale, a sheet of diagrams of the human hand; these had been lithographed, from the illustrations of a treatise on the subject of the characteristics of the human hand, by the celebrated French author, Desbarrolles. The diagrams were entitled "The Hands of Criminals."

We purchased one, and were told by the vendor that there was a great demand for the "hands."

"Have you any idea who they are that buy them?" we inquired.

"The people themselves," replied the shopman. "I see them fitting their own fingers to the drawings, and comparing those of other people to them."

This was interesting information. Some of the sketches are now in our study. The "Bill Thumb," denoting "uncontrolled violence," was, it seems, considered to be a true representation of the thumb of several well-known garrotters.

At one time we were very much interested in the garroters. When that particular crime was very frequent, and the punishment of it uncertain and ineffective, there were some of the class that used to come to one of our mission-rooms.

One evening we perceived, seated near our remarkable fire, reading the Bible, a peculiarly thick, strong, short man, with his hair cut close to his head, his face newly shaven, and wearing a new suit of rough clothes. The three latter circumstances indicated to us that he was recently discharged from prison, and that the "Aid Society" had helped him. We addressed him in a friendly way, asking "what he was going to do for his living?"

"Anything that comes the road," he said.

"What have you been doing?" we inquired.

"Garrotting," he answered gruffly.

"You don't intend to continue it?" we remarked, in the same manner that we should have referred to any other sort of employment.

He replied that "he did not think he should; it was all up with that sort of thing;" and he spoke in rather a deprecatory tone, as if it was a pity that so good a pursuit was not practicable any longer.

We suggested to him various kinds of work, for which his great muscular power seemed to qualify him; but he negatived them all with, "Quite out of my line, Missus."

"I went," said he, "pig-driving, but I could not stand it. They provoked me so, I killed three or four of them, and then I took to sheep, by the way that they were quieter and easier to manage; but such stupid fools are only fit to have a dog over them, who is content to worry them in, whenever they slip out of the way. I'd like to have a horse under me, and to hunt wild animals. It is all that's left to me to do."

We expressed a fear that he would not be able to realise his desire in that respect. "The care of cattle," we said, "was usually committed to persons of a kindly disposition."

"I'm kind enough," he said, "when there is nothing to be got out of the other thing. I don't much care for prize-fighting nor for bull-baiting; and as for hunting rabbits and hares, I hate it. You see, Miss, I was brought up to bruising; and couldn't meet my match anywhere. That was how I took to garrotting—to find one that could floor me. But when you come on a man sudden, he hasn't got no power; he trips up, and you have him to answer for next minute."

"Oh, that's dreadful!" we exclaimed.

"So it is, Miss. If I'd have found a man that could have doubled me up, I'd have given up the business in toto. But no such thing! They went down like putty; and I had nothing to do but to



rob them, and they deserved it; not a bit of good in them."

"Then you rushed at people's throats to induce them to knock you down, is that it—the cause of your crime?"

"Very like it. I'd have taken my fate anyhow, if they'd have done it. They'd have prevented me from going on with the work."

"Don't you think it is very brutal to test your strength by an attack on your fellow-creatures that may be the cause of their death? 'Thou shalt not kill' is one of the commandments. God says that 'Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed;' what do you think of those things? You'll commit murder some day, and be hung."

"Murder!" he exclaimed. "I don't intend to murder people. It is no murder when you don't hate them, and have no quarrel with them. But I will give it all over, indeed, now; only I don't know what to be doing. I have been reading about Goliath and the Philistines; they were first rate."

"And they were conquered by God. No one can fight against Him. It was He that put you in prison and punished you; and He now offers you mercy and pardon as He did to David, when he prayed for it," we replied.

"This is very true, Miss; but I can't knit silk

gloves like Joey there. Show your fingers, Joey ! Now look at mine, Miss."

The hands of the two men were immediately laid side by side for our inspection ; and certainly the sight was very curious. Hitherto, we had not noticed these details ; but, reminded by this movement, we looked at the thumbs of both ; and detected the "Bill thumb," where it might be expected to be found, with our friend the garrotter. He held it up, and called our special attention to it.

"This is what our picture calls 'uncontrolled violence,' " he said ; "Joey's is 'sleight o' hand.' Ain't you a conjuror, my boy ? " he inquired of the friend whom he had now rendered conspicuous.

"Show your knitting, Joey," he added ; and Joey responded by producing a piece of knitting on which he was at work.

It was a coarse white woollen glove, of the pattern worn by the metropolitan police.

"My wife has an order for them from the Sergeant," he explained, "and I help at it."

"She does it somehow different from me," he continued, as we examined the performance, "and uses less wool. I do it too tight, and it don't pay —my way doesn't, such a lot of worsted it takes."

"Why do you do it at all ? " we urged. "It is no work for a man."

"It keeps my hand in practice for the fine

touches," he explained. "I just like to be able to do things with the tips of my fingers."

"Were you a conjuror?"

"I did do tricks, ma'am, once of a time."

"His tricks was all on silk pocket-handkerchiefs. He slipped them up his sleeve, and no one ever found them again," interjected our informant.

"Picking pockets was his sleight o' hand; and well he did it, too," was the boastful declaration of another friendly voice, while Joey and his friend laughed heartily.

With earnest prayer for help, we tried to lead these hearts, which were absorbed in such foolish thoughts, to Him who alone could draw them to better things, even His own wondrous work of love for their souls.

We opened the Bible, and began to read the parable of "the strong man armed." Before we had reached the end of the very few verses in which it is told, both the men who had been the objects of our special prayer had left the room, and we concluded our address to an audience in which we felt too little interest. Regret that these two persons had refused to listen, occupied our mind so much, that it was difficult to continue our remarks on the verses. However, the congregation was very attentive, as we went on to explain "the stronger than he;" and the "armour wherein the strong one had trusted."

Sometimes, comments were volunteered on the latter subject by the hearers. We were told, that "some trusted in one thing, and some in another;" and then followed a catalogue of things in which, according to the experience of many present, people commonly trusted.

"Cleverness," "cunning," "quickness," "agreeability," "lies," "impudence," "wit," "strength," &c., and an immense number of words were strung together, to illustrate the idea of a person depending on human resources; and most willing ears were lent to the poor effort to describe the "STRONGER THAN HE."

We spoke of Jesus, His divine power, and its action by the Word of God—"quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

It was a great comfort, just at that moment, to go "boldly to the throne of grace;" and tell all our weakness to the High Priest, who was touched with the feeling of our infirmity. He, Himself, suffers pain when those to whom He is offering His great salvation turn away, and will not hear

His loving message. While we were yet praying, the answer to our petition came, and the trouble was lifted off our soul. Faith and hope revived within us; and a new zeal sprang up, which inspired us to go forward, without doubting and fearing as to results. Memory recalled at that moment the case of another garrotter, who had visited our mission-room, and who, too, had occupied himself with reading the Bible, as the strong man had done, who had just left us. The scene of the crucifixion was the subject, that was chosen by the former man to whom we allude. He read it over, and over, and over. The story became so real to him, that he seemed to be trying to enact it. His attitude and gestures excited our attention. Stretching out his arms, he said:—

“Was it in this way they nailed Him? Did they put the brads through and through Him to the very wood; and His feet, one over the other, were they nailed through to the timber; with thorns bleeding His head, and His side speared? Oh, it was awful! What torture! My God—the agony!” And the man actually perspired on the book. “First they beat Him with stripes—*whipped Him!* Spat upon Him, made Him walk under a heavy burden until He fell? O Lord, it was too much! And *He was dumb as a sheep before his shearers, so opened He not His mouth?* HE WAS DUMB WITHIN!”

This was true silence—*dumb within!* I held my breath under the lash: I would not roar for pain, nor scream for mercy, though I bit my lip through; but I was not *dumb within*. My heart was bursting with violence, rage, cursing, and revenge. Every stroke made me worse than ever. I hated those that laid them on me. They took no effect on Him. He was not moved to anger, but was quiet; and reviled not again, when He suffered threatened not. Then, He was God and not a man. I see it all—He suffered for me!

The man received Christ instantly. We had much subsequent knowledge of him, and can testify that he became a sincere follower of the meek and lowly Saviour.

Some weeks passed before we saw our "strong" friend again. He reappeared on a Sunday evening, and had a very subdued look.

"Have you got work?" we asked him.

"Yes, thank you. And thank God, ma'am," he answered, "I have got work, and I can do it. There's One that can make me do it, and that's the Lord Jesus. He is stronger than me. You said He was, and so He is. I dare not disobey Him, and I wouldn't wish to disobey Him. I went to the chaplain, and I told him I wished to be conquered, and that I'd like to have a spade to go digging; so he gave me one, and sent me to join the gang of

navvies at the railway cutting in — Street ; and I came up to tell you about it, for fear you would be thinking that I was at the old work again."

"Was it the story of the 'strong man,' that made you try to do right?"

"It set me thinking; and then I found out what it was that is like a two-edged sword. It was the word *peace*. I could not get it out of my head. I had no peace. You and others had ; but I was full of every kind of worry and annoyance. My back was always getting put up, and I could not be quiet. With one thing or another, I had rows all day, and was never done with them. Now, thank God, I am hard at work, and have no time to fight with any one, and I don't want to. Peace on earth is what we are to have; and I hope and pray that I may never break it."

This man has been sent to Australia; and we have reason to believe that his life has been consistent with his profession.

"Joey," too, turned over a new leaf in his story, which also was a strange one. He was last heard of as an *employé* in a place of public entertainment, where the performances exercised his "sleight o' hand" legitimately and profitably.

Acts of violence *per se*, detached from the motives of robbery or murder, are not uncommon in young criminals. Children early commit transgressions

of this kind; and we call them "unaccountable fits of passion." They indicate an abnormal condition of the system; and require to be treated constitutionally. If this were skilfully done in youth, it would spare such trouble as the "strong man," whose case we narrated, gave the country.

Juvenile offenders who betray this kind of thing, ought to be referred to special medical officers, who should be attached to Reformatories. The study of their cases would benefit the community at large. The disorder that affects them is not confined to the humble classes. It is to be found in all ranks of life. There is more difficulty in reaching its victims among the upper sections of society than the lower; so that the specimens that are attainable are valuable, as affording opportunity for the practice of remedies.

Violence connected with robbery and murder, is a different sort of thing from simple violent action. It is not unfrequently committed with reluctance. The actor is possessed with their purposes, or motives, whatever they may be; and they accomplish their end, by any means that they can compass, accompanied by violence, or not, as the circumstances of the case necessitate.

The German word *besetzt* is very expressive of the state of mind in which a person carries out their point unsparingly, through every obstacle.



In this condition of the human soul, when nothing restrains, no consideration influences, but a dominant will asserts itself, and acts regardless of consequences, having no care for personal preservation, and no respect for human pain, physical or mental, there is an inhuman influence at work, whose interests are contrary to those of the man or woman who is under its control. They are dehumanized by it.

The only explanation that can be found of this anti-human force is in the Word of God ; and, there, it is referred to Satan. In the days of our Lord it was distinctly recognised, and dealt with as such by the Saviour, and by His disciples. The early Church believed in the "possession of the devil." As doctrines that defined evil became less prominent, its causes and results were, in the lapse of time, less considered, and not so distinctly treated as of old ; and the valuable line of demarcation was lost sight of, that classified the manifestations of wickedness. Of this spiritual weakness Satan took advantage ; and has contrived to work mischief in human beings, without attracting attention to himself. His object is gained when he is concealed ; and when men credit themselves with the whole evil proceeding, and omit charging him with his true share of it.

It would be well to restore to its right place in

Christian ethics, the practice of observing the devil's action in the human subject. Though we do not understand it, let us not ignore it. Those who search the Holy Scriptures, find it meets them there so frequently, that they must acknowledge its existence. The formula for its treatment given us by our Lord, is similar to that prescribed for the other acts of faith directed by Him. We have no reason to shrink from the contemplation of the facts, that are revealed in the Word of God, in connection with it. Success is assured us in our struggle with the enemy of souls, if we meet him in open combat, with the power of the Holy Ghost.

He seeks secrecy. We must bring him to the light in this matter, as the procuring cause of certain criminal acts, in individuals who submit themselves to his control.

Hysteria, epilepsy, and lunacy are diseases, to which criminals are, to some extent, more liable than other people. They interfere with the power of reason; and, therefore, persons affected with them are unable to resist the power of a force, that usurps the direction of their functions, and works their members by a will that is foreign to their own. It is not proved that that possession of the faculties of diseased subjects by Satan, is more frequent in the case of criminals than in those of other sufferers;

nor that he finds criminals, under those diseases, more capable instruments for the dissemination of defilement, than those who have not the criminal qualities ; or rather, whose natural qualities are not relatively proportioned, and combined, so as to form the criminal characteristics.

Satan does not need to wait for disease and crime to be present, in order to show his power. He works without them. The inhuman influence that produces infanticide, and suicide, is wholly disconnected with them ; hence, much discrimination is needed in classifying the phenomena of "possession," as distinct from those of ordinary crime, and of disease.

It is important to note, that the Word of God does not charge the devil with being the instigator of the gross acts of sin, against which special commands were given to the nation of Israel. In the enumeration of them, in minute detail by the Great Lawgiver, there is no mention of such acts as suicide, and infanticide, and other inhuman deeds.

It is hard to realize the utter depravity of man without the devil's influence ; but no inference is clearer than the light that these laws of the ancient people cast on it, side by side with the declarations on the subject, contained in other portions of the Holy Scriptures.

Under the New Testament dispensation, the power

of the devil is more distinctly taught than in the Old. The Lord Jesus Christ, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, procures for those that "receive Him" a new nature, born again from above, and hating the sins of the flesh. This is the Christian state. In it the danger from Satan is announced to be great, and the man who is possessed of the Holy Spirit of God is warned of the attacks of the Spirit of Evil.

If the members of the body of Christ, who are subject to the assaults of the devil, only escape by Almighty protection, and the use of armour, made invincible by His grace, what wonder is it that criminals, and other unconverted persons, who are without these defences, fall victims to him? Nevertheless, so far as it is given us to perceive how matters stand, concerning the manifestations of Satan's interference with various classes of men, we believe that he has less connection with crime, than with sins that do not enter into its category.

For example, we do not find him using criminals as the agents of spiritualism; from this special effort of the devil to connect men and demons, they are remarkably free no doubt; because their evidence on the subject of the spirit world would not be received, and it might injure the whole scheme to set them up as witnesses in these transactions, or to bring them forward to work in it.

He is too intelligent, and too conversant with the phases of human thought, to be betrayed into connecting his masterpiece of iniquity with the risk of disrepute through them.

More than that, it is evident that he spares those on whom he practises spiritualism, from producing degrading vices, leaving them usually in the enjoyment of their human virtues, for the benefit of the character of his special business, the establishment of communication between demons and men.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed : for in the image of God made He man."—GEN. ix. 6.

"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders."—MATT. xv. 19.

"The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; . . . murders."—GAL. v. 19-21.

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"I bear upon my brow the sign  
Of sorrow and of pain :  
Alas ! no hopeful cross is mine,  
It is the mark of Cain.

The course of passion, and the fret  
Of godless hope and fear—  
Toil, care, and guilt—their hues have set,  
And fixed that sternness there.

Saviour ! wash out the imprinted shame,  
That I no more may pine,  
Sin's martyr, though not meet to claim  
Thy cross, a Saint of Thine."

—*Lyra Apostolica.*



## CHAPTER IX.

THERE is a tendency in human nature to get rid of the imputation of the guilt, of the crime of murder. It is commonly charged to some extraneous influence, which is asserted to be irresistible. In most cases, it is attempted to trace the influence that has been so powerful, to disease. The verdict of "temporary insanity" is issued, regardless of any evidence by scientific men, as to the nature of the malady with which the accused is assumed to have been affected at the moment in which he committed the crime ascribed to him.

This disease of the brain is still so obscure, that its premonitory symptoms are unknown to the medical profession; and, yet, its development is terribly alarming. Without warning, it attacks its victim, and causes him to kill a fellow-creature; and as suddenly leaves him again, carrying away the *sequelæ* of the disorder from his system; and suffering no sign of the recent ailment to remain, but the blood of the slain!

The effort to deny that murder is attributable to



man, is a monstrous betrayal of desire to appear better than we are. The truth is, that men hate the penalty attached to the crime of murder; and that they want to avoid the infliction of it.

"He that hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," occurred in our lesson as we read one day to our class of discharged female prisoners. We were unacquainted with the crimes of those who sat before us. All we knew of the company present was, that every one had been in prison, for some criminal offence or other. Not one of them was known by us to have committed murder; and we had not chosen the portion of Scripture to which we had turned, with any special reference to a particular class of women.

Our hope was, to have set before our hearers, the contrast between the law of love, and the natural enmity of the human heart to God, and to fellow-beings. It happened that we raised our eyes at the close of the reading, and discovered that more than one of the circle was in tears.

When the meeting was over, a very quiet, reserved woman stood at the door; and asked to speak with us alone.

"You know who I am, my name is ———. Do you forget me?"

Memory recalled the woman's face; and, after a while, the place where we had seen her before.

"You are ——, a 'life woman'?"

"Yes, and I wish I was not a '*life* woman.' They ought to have considered what was to become of me before they commuted my sentence. I have no business to be in the world. Nobody wants me. People that know me hate me; and those that don't know me, are of no use to me. I have no one to love, nor to be fond of me;" and the poor woman began to weep miserably.

It was a wretched case. S—— had been some fifteen years, or so, in prison; and the authorities had recently sent her out on license. She was unwelcome to her family; and her only resource was to seek the shelter of the mission, where there was provision made for her to live in a lodging, and to be employed every day; but she would not be hidden. The morbid nature of her sensitiveness about her crime, made her tell her story in a most unnecessary manner. The rules made by the Mission, to conceal the history of women discharged from prison, did not protect her; for she betrayed herself, with a stern determination not to accept kindness on what she considered false pretences.

In vain we argued with her, to be silent as to her past life; and to work among those who had no

acquaintance with it. But she could not follow our advice; and was not content to remain unknown; and, when known, made herself wretched, by taking offence when none was offered, always thinking that she was the object of dislike, though she acknowledged that she felt kindness and pity when shown her, and was grateful for them.

This woman's case was the first of the murder class that we had had an opportunity of tracing. We sent her to a clergyman's family as a needle-woman; and her capability, and her *piety*, made them very kind to her. Her mistress was specially drawn to her; and, in speaking to her one day, proposed that she should take a Sunday-school class.

"Me!" said the usually reticent grave woman with such emphasis, that the lady immediately comprehended that there was some very profound emotion stirred up; and she would have closed the conversation, but that the woman broke down into a torrent of tears, and told her story, to the amazement of her auditor, and not a little to her horror.

However, the lady and her husband did not put her out of their house. They entreated her to keep the matter secret; and, for some time, she remained in subdued misery, evidently eager to burst forth and relieve her mind. From time to time, to give her vent for her emotion, the clergyman and his wife talked over her case with her, and en-

deavoured to convince her of their pity and goodwill.

One day she answered the hall-door bell; and found that the caller was a "hawker," offering brooms for sale, whom she had known as an inmate of one of the prisons in which she had been confined. The women confronted each other with animosity and anger; and a scene resulted, that spread full particulars through the household of the life of the needlewoman. That night she fled away from her friends; and was not seen for a long time, by those who were kindly interested in her fate.

When she was again in communication with them, one of the ladies of the mission took her with her to a meeting for prayer and reading the Scriptures. "All the time," she said, "I was in trepidation, lest some one knowing me should say, 'What brings *you* here?'" When she and her friend were walking home, through the crowded streets that night, she started more than once, "for fear the police should ask her why she was out." The lady reasoned with her; and she owned the foolishness, of fancying that she was so well known to the general public: "You forget the waxworks," she groaned.

"There is not the slightest resemblance between you and any of the figures there; and if

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"There is not the slightest resemblance between you and any of the figures there; and if

there were, it would be impossible to detect you, by merely seeing you in the street, passing along. Never fear that, poor thing !”

“I don’t really, in my heart, believe that I can be pointed out, but I have so deep a sense of guilt, that I know it must be seen in my face,” she replied.

“You can only believe in the Blood that atones for the soul; and rest in the Lord, who has forgiven you, and washed you clean,” was urged.

“Yes, I believe that He can make me white as snow, in His *own* eyes, because Jesus died; but not in the eyes of others, and never in my own. Oh, you don’t know what I hear in my ears, night and day; and it will never cease while there is life in me—such a cry !”

The mother-heart, once by passion, rage, jealousy, and vengeance, driven out of the woman, was come back; and its pulses beat all through her system. It was torture to her to live. We could not talk to her of reunion with the babes that had been dashed back to the Heavenly Giver, with wicked hands and desperate heart; nor speak to her of the love, in which the little ones were safe and happy, cherished in the bosom of the “Everlasting Father.”

This was misery too great for such comfort. We dare not say that she had consolation in the Saviour. Her visits to us were times of acute pain; every

sympathetic chord was touched, in which women feel most keenly. After a service, one evening, the preacher's attention was called to her, and her name mentioned. He went to her with all the earnest warmth of a parent's pity, and laid his hand on her arm, to show her the tenderness he felt; and she rushed out of the door, as if she had been hurt!

The last we saw of this wanderer, was on a railway station, when she was going to her native town, sent by the Union to the place of her "settlement." Her health seemed to have utterly broken down; and she was quite reconciled to the home that was provided for her in the Workhouse. "It is better than I deserve," she said.

We failed to perceive any sign of brain disease in the foregoing case, nor any tendency to "temporary insanity." In several others, whose similar circumstances have since interested us, we found the same characteristic — morbid desire to be known.

A young woman, whose fate had excited a great deal of pity, was liberated and came to the mission. She was placed in a private family, where the servants had no information about her antecedents; and her reception among them was as cordial, as is usual in a well-ordered servants' hall. In a few hours after her arrival, she communicated from whence she had come confidentially; and it was soon

known through the house, that the celebrated —— was their new housemaid ! It surprised her extremely when they declined her company. The rejection led to some quarrels ; and, finally, to a violent scene, in which, with a knife in her hand, the homicide threatened to renew her crime.

Facts tend to prove, that this crime is occasionally repeated. Homicides betray themselves by their expressions under provocation ; and experience makes those that know them dread their society. The danger of releasing them from prison is very great, unless they are truly converted to God, and have got the power of His Holy Spirit abiding in them.

There are many various ways of committing this crime. Those who have once actually done it, are no longer fit to be trusted to respect the lives of others. A girl who had been imprisoned for concealment of birth, and, on discharge, had been sent to service as a nurse, came to the Mission, and asked to be placed in some other situation ; "because she was afraid, that she might be tempted to do something to the baby, when it was troublesome."

It is our own conviction, that there are "habitual homicides," as well as "habitual burglars ;" and that the murderer is no more subject to "temporary insanity" than the thief.

Regular professional robbers have frequently told us, that they often did their very best "stroke of work," on an impulse, that came on "like lightning;" an opportunity suddenly arising, which they had seized, without the least premeditation; and had found no regret attending it, if it was done satisfactorily.

The plea of "temporary insanity" would not have been received in their case; and there seems no reason, that it should be so successfully urged in the other.

There is sufficient parity to identify the cases as similar; and enough disparity to make it difficult to classify them as alike.



## CHAPTER X.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world !”—JOHN i. 29.

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”—ISA. lxi. 1.

“And Jesus said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”—LUKE vii. 48.

“And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”—1 COR. vi. 11.

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“Come, wandering sheep, oh come !  
I'll bind thee to My breast ;  
I'll bear thee to thy home,  
And lay thee down to rest.

I saw thee stray forlorn,  
And heard thee faintly cry,  
And on the tree of scorn  
For thee I deign'd to die—  
What greater proof could I  
Give, than to seek the tomb ?  
Come, wandering sheep, oh come !

I shield thee from alarms,  
And wilt thou not be blest ?  
I bear thee in My arms ;  
Thou, bear Me in thy breast !  
Oh, this is love—come, rest—  
This is a blissful doom.  
Come, wandering sheep, oh come !”

—*From the Spanish.*





## CHAPTER X.

THE theory that crime is habitual, and that it is, necessarily, hereditary, suggests that the class of persons addicted to it, should have much consideration from those who are without such proclivities. It should be remembered, that persons who have the criminal characteristics, do not inevitably commit crime.

There are deterrents to which they may be subjected, that are thoroughly effective; and that, in cases to which they are applicable, have the most powerful influence. What is called a "casual act of crime," is an instance of the temporary relaxation of the check, whatever it may be, which represses individual natural tendency; and, in so far as outward conduct goes, keeps men in safe custody.

Early training, moral company, and good social regulations, all have this effect; and restrain the flood of wickedness, that would overspread the world, if there existed in its midst no such resisting element. Many would do criminal acts, if they dared; and every one with criminal qualities could,

if they would, do crimes. The *modus operandi* would be quite easy to them.

This is not the case with others who have not their "parts," nor peculiar qualities, and talents. For example, learning how to steal would be very difficult to a person who has a strong moral sense. Fraud and violence, also, are not to be done by every one. They, too, require for their performance special capabilities. Whenever crime is developed, we may conclude, that it has been suffered to grow, for want of proper discipline being applied to the offender at the right time.

In this book we cannot have a chapter on the nature of this discipline, nor on the period at which it would be efficient in its application.

If the subject interests the public sufficiently to call for a second volume, we will discuss these points, including the treatment of juvenile offenders, and the punishment of adults.

It is the duty of Christians to study the conditions and circumstances of criminal people. They are bound to seek their eternal salvation. It will not be hindered by their being under the restraints of good morals.

We dare not assert, that spiritual blessing will be promoted, by any such reformation as may be effected by moral discipline, for "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to

.

His mercy" in Christ Jesus we are saved; and only "by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves," or of their own doings, will any enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Nevertheless, it is our business to prevent offences against the law of our Heavenly Father; and to hinder the manifestation of evil, by all the means that He has provided in His revealed will for this purpose.

The Bible contains commands to deal with sin, as well as to preach the Gospel to sinners.

The thorns and thistles that the earth brings forth, typify the criminal acts that deface human society; and it is as inconsistent with the teaching of the Scriptures, to suffer the latter to overrun the community, as to permit the former to render our world unprofitable, and unpleasant.

The labour of the husbandman will not restore the bloom of Eden's garden to a ruined Earth, any more than the work of the Reformer will produce the Reign of Righteousness. But, while we encourage the toiler to give the sweat of his brow to the soil, we must not cease to do all that in us lies, to prevent the defilement, and misery, of crime.



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